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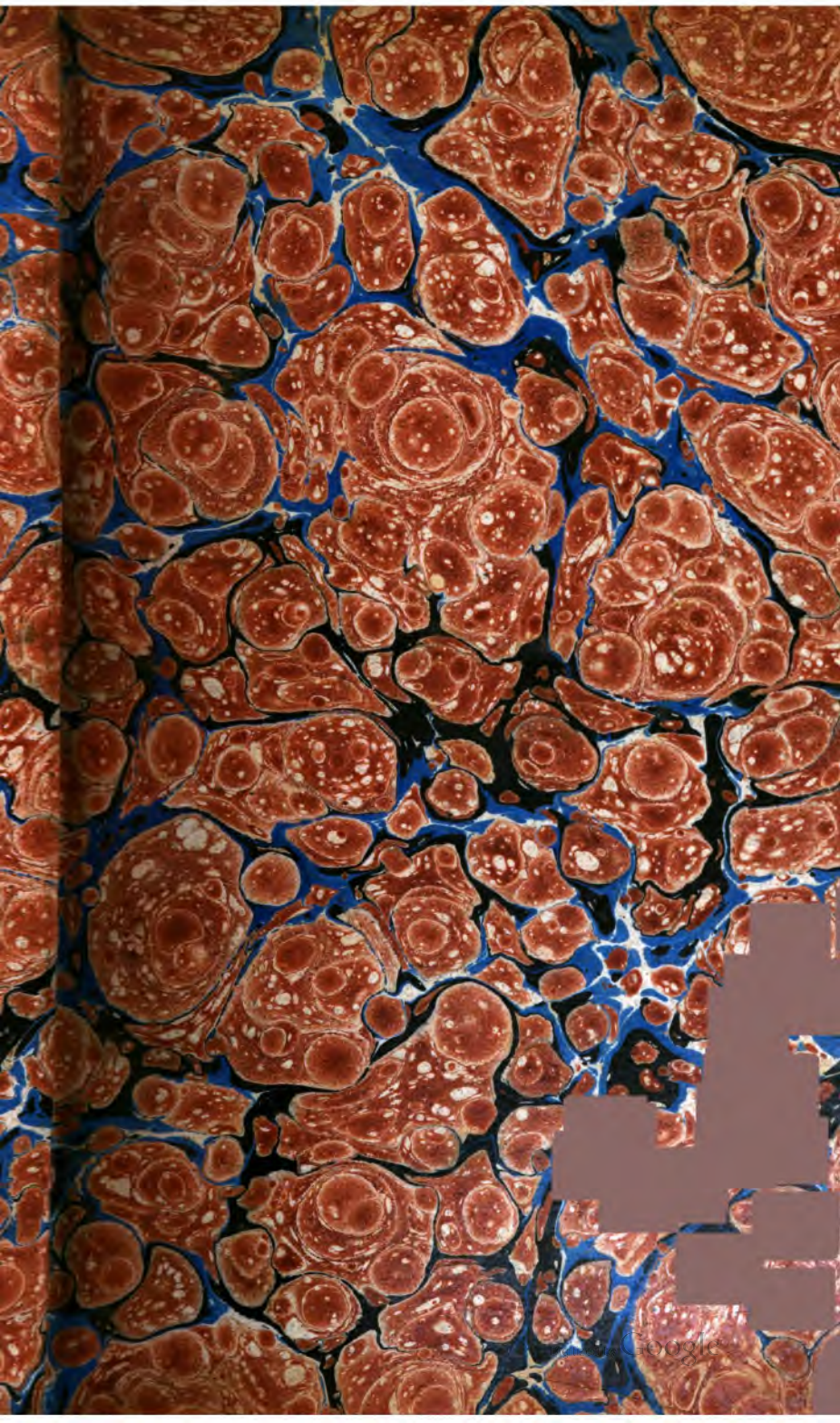
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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
HELVETIC REPUBLICS.

By FRANCIS HARE NAYLOR, Esq.

VOL. III.



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CONTENTS.

Chapter XVII.—Death of the Count of Toggenburg
—Disputes between the Cantons of Schwitz and Zurich—Both Parties have recourse to Arms—Congress at Lucerne, in order to effect a Reconciliation—Hostilities commence—Unpopularity and Danger of Zurich—The Zurichers reduced to sue for Peace; its Terms—Intrigues of Stüssi—All his influence exerted in promoting an Alliance with Austria, p. 1

Chapter XVIII.—Duplicity of Zurich—The Emperor visits Switzerland—War renewed—The Lines of Hirzel forced—Battle of St. James, and Death of Stüssi—Truce concluded—Congress at Baden—Hostilities recommence—Capture of Greiffensee—Bruck surprised—Armagnacs—Celebrated Battle near Bâle—Heroism of the Swiss—Siege of Zurich raised—Congress at Constance—Peace - p. 59

Chapter XIX.—Dissensions between Berne and Friburg—Situation and Views of the House of Austria—Invasion of the Thurgau—Pilgrim de Heudorf—Affairs of Milan—Rise and Character of the Sforza Family—Siege and Treaty of Waldshut—Distress of Sigismund—Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy—His ambitious Projects developed—Hagenbach—Intrigues of Lewis XI. King of France—His Rivalship with Charles—League between Sigismund and the Swiss - - - - p. 144

**Chapter XX.—Craft of Lewis—War between the Helvetic People and the Duke of Burgundy—
a 2 Charles**

CONTENTS.

- Charles makes himself Master of Lorraine, and invades Switzerland—Capture of Granson—Inhumanity and Treachery of the Conqueror—Burgundians defeated at Vaumarcus—Battle of Morat—Behaviour of Charles—The Duke of Lorraine joins the Swiss—Battle of Nancy—Death and Character of the Duke of Burgundy - - p. 208
- Chapter XXI.—Conduct of the King of France, upon the Duke of Burgundy's Death—Distress of the Princess Mary—Affairs of Italy—Lewis reconciled to the Swiss—His Death, and Character, p. 284
- Chapter XXII.—Internal State of Switzerland—Diet at Stanz—Nicolas de la Flue—Friburg and Soleure admitted into the Helvetic League—Their Constitution and Government—Disturbances at Bâle and Zurich—Waldman beheaded—Venality of the Swiss; Fresh Commotions at St. Gal - p. 336
- Chapter XXIII.—Affairs of Italy—Conduct of Ludovico Sforza—Claims of Charles VIII. to the Throne of Naples—Rome—Flagitious Character of Alexander VI.—Venice—Charles conquers Italy—His hasty Retreat - - - - p. 386
- Chapter XXIV.—Affairs of Germany—Maximilian succeeds to the Imperial Throne—General State of Europe at his Accession—His Views, and Character—He visits Italy—Origin and Cause of the Suabian war—Hostilities commenced—Encounters at Hard, Bruderholtz, Schwaderloch, and Frastenz—Maximilian declares against the Swiss—Battles of Malscheide and Dornach—Peace concluded - p. 411

HISTORY

OF THE

HELVETIC REPUBLICS.

CHAPTER XVII.

Death of the Count of Toggenburg—Disputes between the Cantons of Schweitz and Zurich—Both Parties have recourse to Arms—Congress at Lucerne, in order to effect a Reconciliation—Hostilities commence—Unpopularity and Danger of Zurich—The Zurichers reduced to sue for Peace : it's Terms—Intrigues of Stussi—All his Influence exerted in promoting an Alliance with Austria.

IT is with ambition as with avarice. The CHAP. XVII. passion increases by indulgence. In the preceding volumes we have contemplated the most grateful spectacle, which

VOL. III. B the

CHAP. the annals of human virtue can exhibit.

XVII.

We have beheld a poor but high-minded people successfully struggling for independence. We have followed them through the various gradations of industry, till they became rich and powerful: From wealth to corruption the transition is, alas! too easy; and we are now hastening to a period, which presents the Helvetic character under colours less attractive; when amidst the dissensions of interested leaders, and the speculations of enterprizing commerce, we shall scarcely discover a single trace of their ancient virtues.

From the conduct of Zurich indeed; upon various occasions, it required little sagacity to prognosticate, that the general welfare of the confederacy would inevitably be sacrificed to the selfish views of that opulent state, whenever interest came in contact with patriotism. Fortunately however for the repose of Helvetia, the hour of trial was delayed, till the pride and power of Austria had been severely humbled; and the fabric of her independence rested upon a basis, too solid to be overturned by the storms

storms of faction, or undermined by the artifices of tyranny. CHAP. XVII.

* The family of Toggenburg had been long distinguished among her most potent and illustrious offspring. About the middle of the twelfth century they had been raised to the dignity of *counts*; from which period they had progressively extended their jurisdiction over the greater part of the adjacent country, till it reached with little interruption from the gates of Zurich to the borders of the Tyrol.

In a former chapter we beheld the count of Toggenburg, opposed to the lawless sons of Appenzel, at the head of the Austrian forces. Yet though naturally stern and despotic, by his moderation during the whole of that memorable contest, he conciliated the esteem of enemies inveterately prejudiced against rank and titles; so that, in all their hostile incursions, the domains of Toggenburg were scrupulously respected, as belonging to a friendly power. The same spirit invariably influenced their con-

* Stumpf, V.

B 2

duct

CHAP. duct with regard to the count ; for though
 XVII.
 repeatedly solicited by his rebellious subjects to support the cause of licentious freedom, they positively refused their assistance, and acknowledged for once the claims of despotism from respect to the person of the despot.

A circumstance like this could not fail to excite suspicions injurious to the honour of Frederic ; and if we attentively examine his political career, we are led ourselves to question his fidelity. For there was a degree of duplicity in his whole behaviour toward the house of Austria, which appears to justify a belief that he never entered cordially into her views, though he was successively invested with the confidential dignities of her negotiator, and her general. Trained in the school of ambition to the pursuit of power, he fought her battles, or directed her councils, so long as her protection was necessary to the accomplishment of his private views. But he seems to have been a perfect adept in all the niceties of political arithmetic, and to have taken especial care never to

to exceed the exact bounds of the con-CHAP.
tract by gratuitous exertions. Availing KVH.
himself of the distress of duke Frederic,
he acquired the county of Sargans, with
various other lordships*, as a compensa-
tion for the expences of the Appenzel war.
But no sooner had that imprudent prince
provoked the resentment of Sigismund,
and the censures of the church, than he
cancelled every engagement with his sinking
ally, and declared in favour of the trium-
phant party. We should deceive ourselves,
however, were we to impute this sudden
change to the perplexing scruples of an
over-delicate conscience. His soul, cast
by nature in her strongest mould, was not
less a stranger to the terrors than to the
weakness of superstition. He embraced
the cause of the council, because it was
most likely to prevail, and afforded to it's
advocates an alluring prospect of temporal
aggrandisement. Neither was he disap-
pointed in his expectations. He obtained

* Wessen, Freudenberg, Nidberg, and Wallenstad,
Tschudi, ix.

CHAP. a considerable accession of territory, as
XVII.

the reward of treachery toward an ancient friend*. Having now reached the summit of his wishes, he endeavoured by negotiations and alliances to give stability to his power. For this purpose he not only formed a league with the Helvetic republic, but even accepted the co-burghership of Schweitz and Zurich. This treaty was to continue in force for the space of five years after his decease. But having no lineal descendants to inherit his vast possessions, and wishing to attach the Schweitzers by still closer ties, he declared them heirs to that part of the Gaster which acknowledged his jurisdiction; an acquisition to them of the highest importance, as they were already masters of the rest.

From these alliances arose that fatal misunderstanding, which, by giving rise to successive scenes of intestine discord, threatened the confederacy with dissolution. Yet, if we examine the treaties se-

* Viz. A part of the Rheinthal, with the town of Feldkirch, and the county of Wallgau. Tschudi.

parately

parately concluded with Schweitz and Zurich, we shall discover no clause in either of them, inconsistent with the most amicable intentions. The mysterious silence, indeed, observed by the count respecting his future heir (as the disposal of his dominions depended entirely on his testamentary arrangements) was calculated to excite universal anxiety; whether it proceeded from the suspicions natural to age, or from a malignant desire of interrupting the harmony, which had hitherto subsisted among the Helvetic states. For at a time, when the laws of succession were guided by no settled principle, it was scarcely possible to ascertain the titles of the various competitors with any tolerable degree of precision. Hence, during the latter years of its sovereignty, the court of Toggenburg presented a melancholy picture of servility and discontent; all who could urge the most remote pretensions to share in the valuable prize, presenting themselves as obsequious and jealous candidates for his favour.

In this situation of affairs, the count died intestate, and was buried at Ruti

CHAP. with his shield and armour*. Among a
 XVII. numerous tribe of relatives, who laid claim
 to the rich inheritance, none possessed a
 fairer title than his amiable widow Elizabeth†, who had been pointed out to the Zurickers by her husband, (though under the seal of secrecy) as heiress to the greatest part of his states. But no document being produced to authenticate this fact, various other pretenders arose to dispute the succession. Among these we must particularly notice Idda, countess of Thierstein, the sister of the deceased; the barons of Metsch, Raron, and Howen, all descended from a female branch; and the counts of Montfort, Brandis, Sax, and Thuring, who were allied by marriage to the house of Toggenburg. All these had long looked forward with anxious expectation to their noble relation's death, and were equally disappointed to find that he had made no will.

* When a noble family became extinct, this ceremony was constantly practised at the interment of the last male representative.

† Tschudi, Hist. des Gr. L. 1. c. 1. p. 111. Though

Though the indecision and jealousy of age, as we before observed, may satisfactorily account for this neglect, by some historians it has been imputed to motives of a very different nature, and explained in the following manner.

Among the persons who at this time were distinguished in republican Helvetia, none stood higher in public estimation than Rudolph Stussi. Endowed with a genius, penetrating and energetic, and combining all the graces of language with the nervous eloquence of thought, he had long directed the councils of Zurich with unlimited sway. But to these brilliant qualities he united a resistless vehemence of character, and a temper impatient of controul. With all his discernment, however, he was totally blind to the defects of his son, a vain and frivolous youth, who had so far mistaken his vocation as to enter into the service of the count of Toggenburg. But being utterly deficient in the external accomplishments adapted to the meridian of a court, and equally destitute of the solid qualities which might have compensated

CHAP.
XVII.
~

CHAP.
XVII.

compensated for the want of them, he soon became an object of derision among the young nobility. Piqued at the affronts to which he was hourly exposed, he complained to his father in terms of bitter resentment. The pride of Stussi was deeply wounded; and though he had hitherto supported the interests of Toggenburg with all the warmth of friendship, he now began openly to loosen the bond of union which had so long subsisted between the two states, and to direct the attention of the senate toward other connexions.

Persuaded also that nothing could prove more repugnant to the count's feelings than the disclosure of his testamentary arrangements, he repeatedly pressed him to designate his intended heir, and thus make known to the republic their future co-burgher and ally. He further entreated him to consent to the redemption of Windeck, upon receiving the money for which it had been mortgaged. Though resolutely determined to evade this demand, the count was still unwilling to exasperate the senate, by an unqualified refusal, and accordingly

cordingly he had recourse to a subterfuge, CHAP. which he flattered himself could not fail ^{XVII.} to succeed. Having requested time for deliberation, he suggested the propriety of assembling a congress of all the Helvetic states at Rapperswyl, before which the disclosure of his future intentions might be made with greater effect. To such a proposal it was hardly possible to start any valid objections. The senate acquiesced; and Frederic gained all that he aimed at, by obtaining time for intrigue.

While Stussi guided the affairs of Zurich with uncontrolled authority, Ital Reding during a long series of years had filled the highest offices in the canton of Schwitz. This circumstance alone is sufficient to inspire a favourable opinion of his talents; since it required no common share of prudence to conciliate the affections of so irritable a people.

Reding, who like the leading men in all the cantons, was wont to distinguish between the interests of his own republic and those of the confederacy, was too shrewd a politician not to perceive the advantage

CHAP. advantage which the Schweitzers might
 XVII. derive from a misunderstanding between
 Zurich and the count of Toggenburg. He accordingly determined to support the ambassadors of the latter, at the approaching congress, with all his influence. This resolution totally disconcerted Stussi's schemes, and compelled him to have recourse to other measures.

Combining the above-mentioned facts with his subsequent conduct, and mistaking the effect for the cause, some historians have persuaded themselves, that it was originally Frederic's intention to kindle the flames of discord in the bosom of the confederacy. There may be some foundation for this opinion. Nay more, there are circumstances in this mysterious transaction, which it is difficult to explain by any other means; supposing it to be true (as it is positively asserted by the partisans of Zurich) that he had confidentially declared to Stussi his intention of bequeathing to his wife Elizabeth the greater part of his domains, *with the express injunction to consent to the redemption*
 of

of *Windeck*. About the same time he is said to have imparted to some of Reding's friends his design of leaving Toggenburg and Usnach to the house of Brandis, with an injunction to cultivate the friendship of Schweitz in preference to that of Zurich.*

It was evidently the policy of the widowed countess, in order to give validity to her claim, to conciliate the good-will of all the neighbouring states; and as the preponderance of Zurich seemed to promise the most effectual support, she naturally courted it's alliance with particular care; offering to surrender not only Windeck with all it's dependencies, but the town of Usnach likewise, and several other places in the Gaster. This advantageous proposal was highly gratifying to the senate, who dreading the mutability of a female mind, issued immediate orders to their troops to take possession of the territories in question.

* Tschudi, ib.

CHAP. XVII. The citizens of Usnath, however, strongly tinged with the prevailing spirit of the times,* and finding remonstrances ineffectual, peremptorily refused to acknowledge the authority of any sovereign, till the rights of succession were more clearly ascertained.

Meanwhile the duke of Austria, being reconciled to the church and her avowed champion Sigismund, signified his intention of redeeming those fiefs, which his necessities had compelled him to mortgage to the count of Toggenburg. Among these was the county of Sargans. Aware that no government is so oppressive as that of a free state toward her colonies,† the inhabitants evinced the liveliest satisfaction

* The arbitrary disposal of subjects has become so fashionable in modern times, that we cannot omit recommending to our reader's perusal the masterly petition of the citizens of Anspach to the king of Prussia, on being abandoned to France, in 1806, for the sake of *political expediency*.

† Mr. Hume, in his third Essay, produces a variety of examples in support of this opinion, which are selected with his usual discernment. But why need we have recourse

tion on returning again under their pristine yoke. CHAP.
XVII.

With a view of securing so powerful an advocate, the countess consented to the proposal, and even voluntarily offered to restore all the other territories which had been granted to her deceased lord by the council of Constance, in reward of his treachery toward the duke of Austria.*

course to ancient history, when the annals of modern Europe afford so striking a confirmation of this melancholy truth? By the despotic ruler of Denmark, a termination has been put to that execrable traffic in human blood, which so long existed to the disgrace and injury of the christian name; while speculations of trade induced a British parliament deliberately to sanction this atrocious commerce, though previously reprobated by a general burst of indignation, when the feelings of humanity were permitted to operate. Since writing the above the pledge has been redeemed, and I feel happy in an opportunity of offering my humble tribute of gratitude and admiration to those ministers, who rescued my country from so foul a stain, and proved to the world that amidst the horrid scenes of rapine and slaughter which desolate the earth, there exists a spot where the claims of humanity are still respected.

* Feldkirch, Wessen, the Rheinthal, and a part of the Gaster.

Encouraged

CHAP. Encouraged by her liberality and her
XVII. perplexities, many of her vassals entertained hopes of recovering the blessing of independence. But from a blind reliance on the vicissitudes of fortune, they adopted no uniform system of resistance; and were therefore disappointed of their wishes.

While some of the ceded provinces celebrated the return of an Austrian prefect with festivities, others beheld the change with less satisfaction, and insisted upon a confirmation of their ancient privileges, before they took the oath of allegiance. It could hardly be expected that any man, educated to a throne would honestly listen to such a proposal. The duke therefore attempted to elude the request by indefinite promises; but perceiving that nothing short of absolute compliance would satisfy the petitioners, he gave way to the natural impetuosity of his temper, and involving the innocent and the guilty in one general proscription, rashly swore to withdraw the blessings of his princely favour, and to abandon them for ever to their fate.

Recollecting

Recollecting however that what he re-
garded as the severest punishment, might
be viewed by his subjects in a different
light, he shortly afterward concluded a
treaty with the count of Werdenberg, by
which the inhabitants of the rebellious
districts were again transferred to another
master.

To be bartered, like beasts of burden,
without their own consent, was an indig-
nity at which the glorious example of re-
publican Helvetia had taught the natives
to revolt. Every generous feeling of the
human mind was called into action, and
inspired the unshaken determination to
resist.

To the forest-cantons, as the most zealous
champions of liberty, they would have
naturally appealed for assistance; but un-
fortunately the count of Werdenberg was
a co-burgher of Schweitz, and it was an
invariable principle of Helvetic policy to
prefer the interests of an ally to every other
consideration. Under these circumstances,
Zurich afforded the only prospect of ef-
fectual support; and a petition was in



CHAP. consequence presented to the senate,
XVII highly descriptive of their distress, and imploring in the most affecting terms the compassion of a people, to whom experience had taught the value of freedom.

How far the feelings of humanity were likely to operate on the decisions of a commercial state, we leave the reader to decide; but backed by the suggestions of interest, her claims were urged with irresistible force. In the protection afforded to the supplicants, Stussi discovered a fresh motive for interfering in the succession of Toggenburg; as he anticipated thence an accession of strength, which could not fail to establish the ascendancy of Zurich in the federal league. He therefore supported the petitioners with all his eloquence, and thus secured their success.

This negotiation was so artfully conducted, that the other cantons entertained no suspicions of its existence, till it was brought to its completion. But no sooner was the transaction made public, than it excited a general commotion throughout the Helvetic states, by whom it was regarded

garded as a manifest infraction of the CHAP.
constitutional bond. Among the com- XVII.
plainants none were so violent as Schweitz
and Glaris, though at first they confined
themselves to remonstrances. Finding
their representations however treated with
neglect, they resolved to profit by the ex-
ample of Zurich, and sent confidential agents
to offer their franchise and alliance to
the inhabitants of Toggenburg and the
Gaster. This mission was accompanied
with a manifesto, setting forth, "that it
was evidently the intention of the deceased
council to have established a union similar
to that, which they now proposed; had
not his benevolent intentions been frustrat-
ed by the hand of death. Little persua-
sion was requisite to accomplish a measure,
to which the natives were previously in-
clined. The deputies were every where
received with open arms, and their offers
accepted with the most enthusiastic gra-
titude. The Jacobins of most towns

Few events could have proved more in-
jurious to the interests of Zurich, which
was thus not only cut off from all inter-

CHAP.
XVII.

course with Sargans, but deprived likewise of a free communication with Italy. Alarmed at the serious aspect of affairs, the senate of Bern thought it prudent to interpose; and by their powerful mediation they at length persuaded both parties to listen to overtures of peace. A congress was in consequence appointed to meet at Lucerne, where delegates from every canton were invited to attend.*

Desirous alike of concealing their real motives, and of giving an air of candour to their proceedings, Schwitz and Zurich selected their ablest men to defend their cause at the approaching diet; the former Beding, the latter Stüssi. These deputies, immediately upon their arrival, delivered a long memorial to the delegates of the other cantons, who sat as mediators between their respective states.

On the part of Zurich it was urged, "That the policy of all the Helvetic republics would equally prompt them to adopt such measures, as appeared best calculated to limit

* Excluded, viz.

the

the ambition of Austria, and to prevent her from recovering any part of those territories, which distress had compelled her to alienate. This maxim, they maintained, had been invariably regarded as a paramount principle by their most enlightened statesmen. Impressed with the necessity of keeping their hereditary foe at a distance from the frontier of liberty, they had taken possession of the town of Kyburg, and solicited the redemption of Wesen, Windeck, and the Gaster. To this request, they asserted, the count of Toggenburg had consented; though from motives, with which they were unacquainted, he warmly conjured them to defer the execution of the treaty, till after his death." They farther contended, "that the most intimate friendship had subsisted between them and the deceased count. Nor were the conditions of their alliance either secret, or confined to his natural life; they extended, likewise, to his heirs.* In consequence of this latter clause, they had repeatedly

* Bullinger, Rhan.

CHAP. entreated him to designate their future co-
XVII.
burgher and ally ; a request, which he long evaded under different pretexts, till being pressed in more urgent terms, he at length condescended to satisfy their impatience by naming Elizabeth."

From that moment they regarded her as the heiress of Toggenburg, and applied to her, after her husband's death, for the redemption of those mortgages, which he had promised to release. With her behaviour, during the whole negociation, they professed themselves perfectly satisfied ; as it had been regulated by the strictest rules of probity, and was precisely conformable to the intentions of their late illustrious friend,

Such, they admitted to have been the state of the negociation, when an unexpected obstacle arose in a quarter, where they were least prepared to encounter difficulties. The conduct of Schweitz and Glaris, upon this occasion, was not less repugnant to the principles of justice, than it was irreconcilable with the character of an ally.

The

The opposition, which they had encountered, was alone sufficient to have cancelled every former tie; but so ardent was their desire of preserving peace, that they were still not unwilling to hold the ceded territory in common with Schweitz, provided their rivals would consent to act with equal generosity. For it would be derogatory from their dignity as an independent people, were they to agree to the partition now proposed, so long as the Schweitzers kept possession of the march, which constituted a part of the same inheritance."

They farther asserted, "that a proposal to this effect had been actually made; but instead of returning such an answer as the liberality of the offer deserved, their opponents had sent emissaries into the Oberland for the express purpose of seducing the natives from their due allegiance. Under these circumstances nothing remained except to apply to the countess for redress; who had not only exerted her influence in their behalf, but generously offered to cede to the republic the town of Usnach, as a

CHAP. compensation for all their losses. This
 XVII. treaty was no sooner concluded, than it
 was notified to the magistrates of Schweitz, in full confidence that they would sympathise in an event contributing so essentially to the happiness and security of a co-estate. But of this friendly communication no notice had been taken, nor was it productive of any salutary result. On the contrary, their agents had been interrupted in the execution of their duty, while by malicious calumnies a spirit of disaffection was secretly excited in various districts subject to the jurisdiction of Zurich."

Having thus finished the statement of their grievances, they appealed to heaven and their allies for redress; declaring, in the most emphatical terms, that "it was still their earnest wish to settle the dispute by amicable means, as they could not contemplate without horror the consequences of a rupture, which must necessarily deluge the fruitful plains of Helvetia with civil blood."

From this hasty outline, it seems evident that the conduct of the count of Toggenburg

burg toward the republic of Zurich had CHAP.
XVII.
 been by no means consistent with candour and sincerity. Yet before we venture to form a hasty conclusion, it is but fair to listen to the opposite party, by whom his memory was vindicated as follows:

"Had the Zurickers," replied Reding, "been so scrupulously attentive to the welfare of their allies as their delegate would wish to insinuate, they would rejoice at the acquisitions which we have recently made, instead of beholding our prosperity with envy *; since to the confederates in general it must be a consideration of perfect indifference, whether the aggregate mass of Helvetic power be augmented by the aggrandisement of Schweitz, or by that of Zurich."

Our adversaries boast much of the count of Toggenburg's partiality toward themselves; but he was connected with us by similar ties. And, if it be allowable to estimate the sentiments of men from their actions, we may honestly infer that his af-

* Wagner MS. Stettin, Tschudi.

fection

CHAP. section for us was sincere, from his splendid
 XVII. donation of the March.

The nomination of his widow, as the future co-burgheress of Zurich (even could that fact be satisfactorily established), is by no means a convincing proof that it was his intention to constitute her *sole heiress of all his domains*. On the contrary, it seems highly probable that he meant only to bequeath to her a *part*, by way of dowry, in order that the whole might ultimately centre in the natural heirs.

Upon her husband's demise, the countess threw herself on the protection of Zurich, entrusting the management of her most momentous concerns to the avowed partisans of that ambitious republic. By their artifices, she was induced to subscribe to the cession of Usnach; hoping thus to secure the favour of a venal ally, by whose power she would be enabled to maintain possession of all her usurpations, to the exclusion of the legal successors. But, fortunately, the attachment of a faithful people to their ancient government had been
 proof

proof against every seduction; and they had accordingly refused to acknowledge the supremacy of any sovereign, till sanctioned by the authority of law. CHAP.
XVII

Neither threats nor promises had been spared to overcome these inconvenient scruples: but all were unavailing. The fidelity of the natives remained unshaken; for to fulfil the will of a beloved master, was to them the most sacred of duties.

Alarmed at the preparations going forward at Zurich, which the senate no longer attempted to conceal, the people of Toggenburg and Usnach had sent repeated deputations to Schweitz, requesting, in conformity to the intentions of the late count, to be received as allies. A prayer so equitable could not be heard with indifference by men whose hearts were not callous to the blessings of freedom or the feelings of humanity. But in order to give greater effect to their interference, and at the same time to manifest the spirit of moderation which had invariably directed their councils, they had proposed to their allies of Glaris to become parties in

CHAP. in the league; which, with the express ap-
^{XVII.} probation of the duke of Austria, was ex-
 tended to all the inhabitants of the Gaster.

From this simple narrative, added to, it will be easy to determine, whether we have violated the conditions of the Helvetic bond. We are ready to admit, that we received into our alliance the vassals of Toggenburg. But has not the senate of Zurich done the same? And none surely will dare to affirm, that it is criminal in us to afford protection to our allies, merely because they are situated on the confines of Zurich; or pretend that we are bound to respect the deed of Elizabeth as conclusive, when we have every reason to think that, in executing it, she acted in direct contradiction to the will of her deceased lord.

It now remains for our allies to decide respecting the legality of our claims. We make no ostentatious boast of generosity, as our rivals have done, although we proposed to divide the newly-acquired territory with the canton of Glaris; and even now are ready to extend the offer to the
 5 whole

whole confederacy, provided Zurich will act with equal liberality." CHAP.
XVII.

Such were the arguments employed on both sides. We have laid them before the reader with the utmost impartiality, and leave him to draw his own conclusions.

Yet notwithstanding the favourable turn which the contest had apparently taken, it soon became evident, that no beneficial results could be expected from the interference of the other cantons. The haughty soul of Stüssi disdained concession; while Reding was too feelingly alive to the glory and interests of his country, to suffer the insolence of wealth to triumph with impunity. Hence the prospect of a reconciliation became every day more remote. Instead of suggesting expedients for the restoration of peace, the rival deputies scarcely ever met without indulging in gross and acrimonious invectives. So virulent indeed was their animosity, that the congress found it expedient to suspend all personal communication between them, and to direct them to continue the negotiation with the pen. This expedient, however,

CHAP. however, proved of little service, as the
XVII.

~~~~~ same hostile spirit pervaded their memorials, which had before embittered their harangues. The judges, \* notwithstanding, persevered with exemplary patience in their arduous task, and at length came to the following decision: "That Usnach should be restored to the countess of Toggenburg, to remain under her jurisdiction, till the right of inheritance could be ascertained. That the alliance between the canton of Schwitz and the people of Toggenburg and Usnach should be ratified, as there was every reason to believe that it had been sanctioned by Frederic before his death; but, as no documents could be produced to establish the pretensions of Glaris, they must of course be deemed inadmissible. That the treaty between Glaris and Schwitz and the inhabitants of the Gaster having been concluded with the permission of the duke of Austria, must

\* They were nineteen in number, and chosen from the different cantons in the following proportions: from Berne, Lucerne, and Unterwalden four; from Uri three; and from Zug and Soleure two each.

be

be regarded as valid. And, lastly, that no CHAP. XVII.  
indemnification could justly be demanded by the senate of Zurich for the loss of Usnach, as their claims were unsupported by facts\*.

This sentence was no sooner promulgated, than Stussi and his colleagues expressed their dissatisfaction in loud complaints, and even ventured to accuse the arbiters of corruption and partiality. It must indeed be admitted, in justification of their conduct, that every thing had turned out directly contrary to their expectations. And what was perhaps still more mortifying to the vanity of the deputies, the triumph of their opponents was hailed with universal joy. It is scarcely possible, however, to mistake the cause of this general dereliction. A commercial nation is almost always an object of envy to surrounding states. Men bear with tolerable patience the pretensions of birth: but the insolence of wealth is insupportable.

Hitherto, we have considered the conse-

\* Tschudi, ib.

quences

CHAP. quences of Frederic's death, as they affected  
 XVII. the interests of the Helvetic league. It is  
 time to examine them in another point of  
 view, and to inquire what effects they pro-  
 duced upon the minds of his nearest rela-  
 tions.

These, immediately after his decease, as-  
 sembled to arrange a plan for their future  
 conduct. The equal interest, which they  
 all had in defeating Elizabeth's claims, in-  
 duced them for a while to suspend their  
 private animosities. They did not, indeed,  
 oppose her retaining the whole succession  
 by way of dowry, but positively objected  
 to the alienation of Usnach, as beyond the  
 competency of a widow. After much al-  
 tercation, the dispute was referred to arbi-  
 tration, and ultimately determined in fa-  
 vour of the heirs. Elizabeth, by nature  
 mild and unambitious, might easily be mis-  
 led; but she was incapable of deliberately  
 committing an act of injustice. Worn out  
 with incessant contradictions, and dis-  
 gusted by the sordid views of those whom  
 she once considered as her most ardent  
 friends, she discovered that greatness, al-  
 though

though an object of universal envy, is attended with a thousand anxieties, unknown in humbler stations. She therefore surrendered the greater part of her possessions to the natural heirs, reserving to herself only so much as was sufficient to supply the comforts of domestic life, and to answer the calls of benevolence\*.

This resolution proved a fresh source of humiliation to Zurich; for no sooner was the transfer concluded, than the family accepted the freedom of Schweitz and Glaris, and ceded in perpetuity to those cantons the valuable territory of Usnach.

Nor was this the only mortification, which the senate was destined to experience. Irritated at the continual murmurs of a discontented people, the duke of Austria determined to withdraw his protection from the inhabitants of the Gaster; and accordingly surrendered to Schweitz and Glaris, the whole of that mountainous district, together with the towns of Wesen and Win-

\* Tschudi,

VOL. III.

D

deck,



CHAP. XVII. deck, by way of security for a sum of money which they consented to advance\*.

Such a series of untoward events was little calculated to appease the storm, which had been long gathering at Zurich. Frustrated in all their favourite schemes, the senate allowed themselves to be conducted with blind precipitation by the intemperate Stussi. At his fatal instigation, they supplied the natives of Sargans with arms, though in open insurrection against the duke of Austria. For as the count of Werdnberg had not yet taken possession of the ceded territory, those places were still subject to their ancient master.

Perceiving them bent upon hostilities, and that no good could be expected from negotiation, Frédéric thought it advisable to prepare for a rupture, and with this view to strengthen the garrisons most exposed to their attacks. But Stussi, far from being intimidated by these indications, immediately

\* This mortgage never having been redeemed, they have consequently continued subject to those cantons till the present times. Planta's Helvetic Confederacy.

ately

ately assembled a body of militia; and laid CHAP.  
XVII.  
siege to Nidberg, which surrendered in a few days.

Meanwhile the insurgents invested Freuden-  
denberg. As the place was strong, and  
winter was approaching, the commander  
declared his resolution of defending it to  
the last extremity. His situation, however,  
grew daily more precarious, as troops came  
pouring in from Zurich and the Grisons,  
while the vigilance of the besiegers prevent-  
ed the Austrians from sending him any ef-  
fective succour. Terrified at their insulated  
state, and apprehensive of the conse-  
quences of an unconditional surrender, the  
townsmen compelled the governor to capi-  
tulate. Elated with success, Stussi hasten-  
ed back to Zurich, which he entered amid  
the acclamations of the populace, in all  
the pomp of military triumph, preceded by  
his captives, like a Roman conqueror.

All hopes of accommodation being at an  
end, the duke of Austria required from the  
other cantons an explicit declaration of  
their future intentions. From the majority  
he received an unequivocal promise of neu-

CHAP. XVIII.  
 trality; others returned an ambiguous answer; while Zug and Lucerne, with the characteristic integrity of Swiss replied, "that they held themselves obliged to conform, in every respect, to the tenor of the Helvetic league."

Never perhaps was the situation of Switzerland more alarming. A general spirit of insubordination by it's rapid progress threatened speedily to overwhelm her with all the horrors of civil war. Availing themselves of the general confusion, in Toggenburg and many other districts, the people actually shook off their obedience to the existing government. Under the impulse of resentment, the inhabitants of Sargans undertook a predatory expedition against the Austrian territory. Neither was it till after repeated remonstrances from the council of Bâle, that the dread of those censures to which ignorance and superstition attached a preternatural horror, induced them to return to a sense of their duty.

1438. Hostilities, indeed, were suspended in consequence of the award pronounced at Lucerne; but the pride of Zurich was too deeply wounded to justify any hope of per-

manent tranquillity. Too haughty to submit, yet too weak to brave the whole confederacy, she was equally destitute of prudence to disguise, and of courage to avow her resentment. Hence her actions were directed by no well-digested plan of policy. Among other measures, the senate took advantage of the general scarcity, to prohibit the exportation of corn; an ordinance, which reduced many of the adjacent districts to absolute want, as they depended entirely on the markets of Zurich for supplies\*. The neutral cantons could not behold these rash proceedings without serious apprehensions, and in conjunction with several of the Suabian towns renewed their offers of mediation. To this friendly proposal the Zurickers replied, "that experience had taught them the necessity of caution, but that notwithstanding the injustice with which they had been treated, they were still ready to submit all points in dispute to the decision of the emperor, and to abide implicitly by his award." This

\* Tschudi, ib.


CHAP. proposition is supposed to have been sug-  
 XVII. gested by Stussi, whose popularity was now so great, that all his opinions, however variable, were received with the authority of laws. By affected moderation he flattered himself to rescue his country from the imputation of obstinacy, and to throw the odium of a rupture upon the adverse party; whom, he was fully persuaded no considerations would induce to deviate, in a point of such high importance, from the fundamental principles of the union.

Though productive of no salutary results, the negociation proved favourable to the interests of Zurich, as it allowed time for the senate to complete it's levies\*. No sooner were they ready to take the field, than Stussi at the head of four thousand men advanced to Pfefficon, a place situated near the confines of Schweitz, and regarded as an advantageous position. There learning that the enemy had drawn out their militia, with the design of resisting his farther progress, he dispatched an offi-

\* Bullinger, Tschudi.

cer to their camp, with a manifesto declaratory of the motives, which had induced his countrymen to have recourse to arms, and solemnly invoking the Almighty to witness the purity of their intentions. The Schweitzers replied in the same tone of confidence, though in language less acrimonious. They continued to address their opponents by the accustomed name of *confederates*, though Stussi had purposely omitted that endearing title.

Negotiations were still carrying on, through the mediation of Berne, for a prolongation of the truce; but Stussi impatient for an opportunity of avenging his country and adding to his own reputation, caused every proposal to be rejected.— Having directed his lieutenant to watch the motions of the enemy, he penetrated into the Gaster with the greater part of his troops. By this rapid movement he hoped to intercept all communication between the hostile army and their allies, and thus to compel them either to hazard an action on unequal terms, or to surrender at discretion. His plan, however, though com-

CHAP. XVII.  bined with skill, was not conducted with secrecy sufficient to elude the vigilance of the foe; and a skirmish in consequence took place between the advanced guards, in which the blood of Helvetia for the first time was shed in a civil conflict\*.

The signal for hostilities was no sooner given, than the inhabitants of Toggenburg declared in favour of Schweitz; while the militia of Uri and Unterwalden advanced toward the theatre of war. These had yet declared for neither party; but they hoped by a martial countenance, to give additional weight to their mediation. Every member of the confederacy, indeed, was equally active in the cause of humanity; and at length a truce was concluded till the ensuing spring, during which the Zurickers consented, though with manifest reluctance, to allow the free exportation of corn.

1440. The various proposals, however, for general pacification, which were made by the mediating powers during this short suspension of hostilities, they artfully eluded under differ-

\* Ballinger, Tschudi.

ent pretexts. At one time, they offered to refer the quarrel to the award of the emperor, at another they preferred a general congress; and wherever they discovered on the part of their adversaries, the smallest disposition to concur in their suggestions, fresh objections were started, or fresh arrangements were proposed. Convinced at length that no tergiversations could longer avail, and that their duplicity had excited much general dissatisfaction, they consented to leave the question entirely to the decision of their co-estates; with a proviso, "that the league with Sargans should be confirmed, and that in all commercial arrangements they should be exempt from control."

To these stipulations the Schweitzers refused to accede, insisting that the case in point was expressly provided for by a specific clause in the Helvetic bond, and to that, and that only, they would implicitly conform\*.

The conduct of Zurich upon this occasion,

\* Tschudi, ib.

though



CHAP. though in some respects objectionable, car-

XVII.

ried with it an appearance of moderation, well calculated to disguise her real motives. For, in fact, this sudden change was the result of artifice, not of placability. It was the leading object of Stussi's policy to throw the unpopularity of the war upon his adversaries. Hence he studiously avoided bringing forward any proposition, which might remove the obstacles standing in the way of negotiation. The same hostile spirit pervaded all the public transactions of the senate, though their professions were intended to impress the world with the most favourable opinion of their justice and moderation. Thus, notwithstanding their recent engagement to open the markets of Zurich, they subjected the purchasers to so many restrictions, that they amounted to little less than an absolute prohibition.

In the late partition of the domains of Frederic, Toggenburg had fallen to the house of Raron, and was subject to the joint jurisdiction of two brothers; who having arranged a judicious plan of government, called together the principal persons

persons in their state, and communicated <sup>CHAR</sup> to them their resolution of abolishing all <sup>XVII</sup> those oppressive laws respecting the transfer of property, derived from the uncertainty of the feudal code; and of establishing a more lenient and equitable system in their place. Arbitrary arrests were thenceforth prohibited under the severest penalties, and precise and permanent rules promulgated for the direction of the magistrate in the administration of justice\*. It is curious to contrast this delightful picture of philanthropy with the disastrous scenes passing on the bloody theatre of republican Helvetia.

At the expiration of the truce, all intercourse was again suspended between Zurich and the adjacent cantons. This measure was heavily felt by the Schweitzers, whose craggy mountains were little calculated for the cultivation of grain. But every prospect of reconciliation having disappeared, the united forces of Schweiz and Glaris were directed to penetrate into the country

\* Tschudi.

CHAP. of Sargans, and after reinstating count  
XVII. Henry in his legal prerogatives, to give battle to the enemy, wherever they could be found.

Hitherto the people of Sargans had affected to brave the storm; but finding themselves abandoned by Zuric, upon whom they had relied for support, the leaders of the insurrection were seized with a sudden panic at the approach of the hostile army, and endeavoured to save themselves by flight. Deprived of their chiefs, the rebels threw down their arms, and attempted to atone for their past transgressions by the most abject servility. Thus peace being restored to that distracted country, the count of Werdenberg obtained the full enjoyment of his legitimate authority; and in return for this obligation, immediately concluded a perpetual league with his benefactors.

While both parties were seriously occupied in preparations for the ensuing campaign, they addressed memorials to all the neighbouring states. But the conduct of Zuric had not for many years been calculated

lated to increase the number of her friends, CHAP. and she now deeply felt the consequences <sup>XVII.</sup> of her presumption. The current of popular opinion ran strongly in favour of her opponents; evidently less, however, from partiality toward them, than from envy and jealousy excited by herself.

The cantons of Uri and Unterwalden were the first to arm, and their banner was already displayed, before war had been sanctioned by a public decree. A meeting was, at length, convened, for the discussion of this important question. Here, though a great majority appeared in behalf of Schwytz, the partisans of Zurich were far more numerous than could have been expected; finding themselves unable, however, to carry their point by the usual modes of debate, they attempted to silence their opponents by violence and invective. Indignant to observe that their stratagem was likely to succeed, Werner de Brauen, the standard-bearer of Uri, started from his seat, reared the national banner in the midst of his astonished countrymen, and with all the enthusiasm of patriotism exclaimed;

CHAP. XVII. exclaimed; "Heaven forbid! that I should ever bear this sacred symbol of liberty in defence of men, whose disobedience to established laws has given rise to so unnatural a war." The commanding energy of his language, his high character of integrity, the dignity of his station, and the reverence due to his age and experience, imparted to his sentiments a preternatural force. With a spontaneous impulse, the assembly unanimously cried out, "The banner of Uri shall never be unfurled, except in the cause of justice!" The impression was universal, the cry decisive, and a herald was immediately despatched to the camp at Pfaffion with a declaration of war\*.

The forces of Zurich originally amounted to six thousand men; but upon learning the hostile intentions of Uri, they were seized with such consternation, that great numbers deserted in the night. This rendered their position untenable; and the following morning, when the allies sent out a party of light-armed troops to recon-

\* Tschudi.

noitre the country, they learned with agreeable surprise that the heights were abandoned. At first, however, they questioned the veracity of the report, and when the fact was confirmed by additional testimony, suspecting it to be a stratagem, they for some time hesitated to advance. Till being joined by reinforcements from Lucerne, Zug, and Berne, which had recently declared in their favour, they resolved to avail themselves of the general panic, and lay siege to Zurich. With this view the troops of Schwëitz and Glaris, to the number of two thousand, took post at Kilchberg. The Berners, in equal force, encamped at Addiswyl, on the Sil. Twelve hundred Lucerners were stationed at Ruslicon, while the gallant mountaineers from Uri, Zug, and Unterwalden, possessed themselves of the free bailiwicks between Mount Albis and the Reuss. Wherever they came, they found the villages forsaken; the inhabitants having sought shelter, with all their moveable property, within the walls of the capital. By this sudden influx of people, an apprehension of famine

CHAP.  
XVII

famine was created, which added greatly to the general calamity. Aware of the consequences that must inevitably attend a protracted siege, the senate was reduced to the cruel necessity of enjoining the inhabitants of the country, without distinction of age or sex, to return to their native homes. On the promulgation of this edict, the peasantry crowded round the senate house, imploring compassion in the most affecting terms; and when after long and fruitless solicitations they were forcibly compelled to depart, every step which they took, conducted them, in imagination, to the grave.

Released from this heavy incumbrance, the senate began anxiously to prepare for the defence of the city. All the provisions that could be collected were ordered to be deposited in the public granaries, whence they were re-delivered with a sparing hand; the citizens enrolled under different leaders, were instructed in the use of artillery; and armed vessels were stationed on the lake, to defend the mouth of the harbour. These boats greatly annoyed the militia of Lucerne, who were encamped within reach of their

their guns. As it was impossible to silence them, the besiegers revenged themselves by various acts of cruelty, declaring their resolution, for every shot that was fired, to burn a house. This menace was productive of the desired effect, since it alienated the minds of the common people, who now regarded themselves as abandoned by an unfeeling government to inevitable destruction\*.

As the senate had concentrated all their forces for the defence of the capital, the country was left open to invasion. Taking advantage of its unguarded state, Peter de Raron entered the Ellgau at the head of a numerous column, where he met with little resistance; while Henry of Werdenberg advanced to the gates of Gruningen, laying waste the country with fire and sword.

The Zurickers, on their part, made frequent sallies, which obliged the enemy to be continually on the alert. These skirmishes, though by no means decisive, were sufficient to convince the most sanguine

\* Tschudi.



CHAP. partisans of Stussi, that no real advantage  
XVII. could accrue from protracting the contest.

The supporters of the war grew every day more unpopular, and the advocates of peace were proportionally strengthened. Among the various arguments employed by the latter party, none was more efficacious than the opinion that the Schweitzers would be abandoned by their allies, should they in the pride of triumph reject a proffered truce.\*

This last consideration was decisive, and a herald was in consequence despatched to the allied camp, to propose a suspension of arms. This demand, in opposition to all the Schweitzers could urge, was immediately complied with. The neutral cantons interposed in a tone of authority, which silenced all opposition. Fifteen delegates were chosen, who met in a field near Zurich, and came to the following resolutions: "That Schweitz and Glar

\* The objections made by Zurich to the constitutional forms of proceeding were less unreasonable than may be supposed, as Uri, Zug, and Unterwalden were decidedly friends to their rivals. May, III.

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his should remain masters of the country which they had conquered in the Oberland, and near the lake of Wallenstadt; but that Zurich should be repaid a sum of money, which had been formerly advanced to the inhabitants on mortgage: that Pffeicon and Wollrau, with their dependencies, should belong in perpetuity to Schweiz; and finally, that Zurich should be reinstated in all her ancient rights and possessions, except Gruningen and Mashwalden, which should be ceded to Berne *pro forma*, though with the express condition of being restored."

Thus was the sword of civil discord sheathed; but the seeds of animosity lay too deep to be extirpated by the hand of negotiation. On the side of Zurich, at least, it was evident that necessity alone had put a period to hostilities; while the humiliating concessions, to which she had been constrained to consent, still festered in her bosom. Every member of her community reproached himself for the dastardly part which he had acted, and panted after an opportunity of vindicating, by fresh ex-

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ertions,

CHAP. ertions, the sullied honour of his country:—

**XVII.** A spirit like this was too congenial with  
 1441. the ambitious views of Stussi, to be allowed to cool. Assisted by his faithful friend and coadjutor Graff, he seized every occasion of magnifying the national resources, and depreciating those of the enemy; reprobating in the most pointed terms the disgraceful treaty, to which the senate had been reluctantly constrained, by the clamours of a timorous mob; to submit. The equity of the award became likewise a subject of severe animadversion, and the partiality of the judges was artfully attributed to a malignant spirit of envy excited by the superior prosperity of Zurich. It was farther insinuated that, notwithstanding their present degraded state, they might still by judicious management regain their original and proper ascendancy. These hints having excited a general ferment, the adherents of Stussi ventured next, though with extreme caution, to suggest an alliance with Austria, as the surest means of recovering their former splendor. Such a step, they admitted, might be repugnant

pugnant to the prejudices of a few weak bigots, whose limited understandings were incapable of appreciating the nice distinctions of moral rectitude. By their enemies also, it would undoubtedly be represented as a flagrant dereliction of those principles, which it had been their constant study to maintain. But to men of elevated minds, who were able to estimate a measure under all its bearings, the question would present itself in a very different light. They would see, that circumstances were materially changed; and that it was incumbent on public men not to attach themselves with superstitious reverence to established systems, but to adapt their conduct to the fluctuations of human affairs. Such was, precisely, their own situation. Overwhelmed by the pressure of untoward events, they were no longer permitted to choose what was in itself essentially good, but had been constrained to select from existing evils that which was attended with the least disastrous effects.

No sooner was the public mind thus prepared, than negotiations were opened with

CHAP. the Austrian court. Frederic, who had  
 XVII.

lately ascended the imperial throne, was weak, vain, and ambitious. Impressed with extravagant notions of regal power, and delighted with an opportunity of intermeddling in the domestic concerns of a country whose prosperity he had long beheld with jealousy, he issued a decree commanding the Swiss to suspend all farther proceedings, till he had leisure to take cognisance of their affairs. To those cantons, who considered themselves as hardly treated by the award, this injunction held out temptations which it required some fortitude to resist; yet so scrupulously were they attached to the sacred obligation of a promise, that they scorned to avail themselves of the insidious plea: so that, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the imperial commissaries, the award was fulfilled with the most punctilious integrity.\*

Hence it will be easy to infer, with what satisfaction the offers of Stussi were received at the imperial court. Though con-

\* Bullinger, Tschudi.

ducted

ducted with the profoundest secrecy, the CHAP. XVII.  
negociation did not long escape the vigilance of the other cantons. Unable to procure any authentic documents however to substantiate the charge, they proposed a solemn renewal of the Helvetic bond, under pretence of confirming the late happy peace. Oaths are seldom operative, except upon persons whose honesty requires no additional restrictions. The proposal was accepted without hesitation by the senate of Zurich, whose conduct upon this occasion affords an additional proof that no forms of religion can restrain a government, when interest tempts them to deceive.

Meanwhile the treaty with Frederic was carried on with unremitting activity, and had actually proceeded so far, that permission was granted for the plenipotentiaries of Zurich to appear at the Austrian court.\* Delighted with their mission, and vain of the character with which they were

\* Graff and Schwendi, two citizens of distinction, were charged with this important mission.

CHAP.  
XVII.  
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invested, they found the emperor at Salzburg; but were told, that engagements of a more important nature must for a while prevent their audience. This indeed was a severe mortification for men, who considered the interests of a small commercial town as the most momentous of objects. But resentment got the better of pride, and they submitted to travel in the imperial train to Inspruck. When at last admitted into his presence, they apologized with abject servility for the invasion of Sargans, and offered to purchase forgiveness by the cession of Kyburg. Frederic received their excuses and proposals, with the affected condescension of a petty mind gratified in the object of it's fondest pursuit, promised to cast a veil over the past, and assured them (on condition of their continued submission) of his royal protection. In a few weeks a treaty was signed, by which the Senate of Zurich forfeited all pretensions to probity and patriotism.*

* On the 17th of June, the very day upon which Frederic received the imperial crown.

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The important consequences, which re- CHAR.
sulted from this fatal compact, induces us XVII.
to give it to the reader, in the words of
'Tschudi:* " We Frederic III. king of the
Romans, as head of the house of Austria,
do unite ourselves with the republic of
Zuric, covenanting that upon the first
summons our subjects in Suabia shall
march to the succour of the said republic,
provided the attack be made within certain
limits, to be determined by a line drawn
through Friburg and Soleure, from the
source of the Aar to the junction of the
Rhine and Birs; and proceeding thence
through the lake of Constance by Feld-
kirch and Pludenz over the Grimsel and
Furca, to terminate at the point where it
originally commenced."

" The Senate of Zuric, on their part,
ratify in the most ample manner the ces-
sion of Kyburg; and farther agree to the
establishment of a free commercial inter-
course with all the Austrian states."

By an additional clause it was stipulated,

* Book XII.

that

CHAP. that this treaty should be renewed every
XVII.  tenth year, though the omission of that ceremony was in no wise to affect its validity.

Another article was indeed inserted, by which the senate ostentatiously covenanted for the faithful observance of all prior engagements, contracted by them as members of the Helvetic league. But it was easy to foresee, that little confidence could be reposed in the professions of men, who in thus rendering themselves the dependents of Austria, infringed the most sacred of all obligations, and sacrificed every virtuous principle at the shrine of ambition. Besides, it was evident, that the articles of the treaty would be no sooner published, than they would serve as a signal for immediate hostilities.

CHAP-

CHAPTER XVIII.

Duplicity of Zurich—The Emperor visits Switzerland—War renewed—The Lines of Hirzel forced—Battle of St. James, and Death of Stussi—Truce concluded—Congress at Baden—Hostilities recommence—Capture of Greiffensee—Bruck surprised—Armagnacs—Celebrated Battle near Bâle—Heroism of the Swiss—Siege of Zurich raised—Congress at Constance—Peace.

AT no period in the annals of Switzerland, did the ambitious projects of the house of Austria appear more likely to be realized. By his succession to the imperial throne, the head of that powerful family acquired not only various prerogatives in many of the cantons, but likewise more ample powers to enforce them; and the

CHAP.
XVIII.
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CHAP.
XVIII.

the most considerable of the Helvetic states, which in all former contests had served as a bulwark against the common foe, had withdrawn from the federative union, to throw all its influence into the opposite scale.

Hitherto the negociation had been so artfully managed, that no particular of the important secret had transpired. Yet the familiar intercourse, subsisting between Zurich and the imperial court, naturally excited a general alarm. In order to penetrate the intentions of Frederic, deputies were sent to solicit a confirmation of those ancient franchises, which had been derived from the bounty of preceding emperors. But their reception was by no means calculated to generate additional confidence in the sincerity of Zurich. For some weeks they were denied an audience, and when the favour was finally granted, it proved far from satisfactory. They were simply informed, in reply, "that when they had acknowledged Frederic sovereign of the Argau, he would take their petition into consideration." Unprepared for the discussion
of

of a subject of this magnitude, they were dismissed with the vague assurance, that it was the emperor's intention to visit Zurich in the course of the following summer; and that during his residence there, he would make the interests of Switzerland the more particular objects of his attention. Behaviour like this, contrasted with the flattering reception which had been given to the ambassadors of Zurich, excited a lively feeling of indignation throughout the Helvetic states, and induced them to hold a diet at Lucerne, for the consideration of public affairs. Too weak at present to throw off the mask, Zurich also sent delegates to the diet, hoping thus to efface those impressions which so generally prevailed in her disfavour. When sharply questioned respecting the ambiguity of her conduct, her representatives, with apparent candour, replied, that the negotiations with Austria related exclusively to commercial arrangements, and had no connection whatever with the general welfare of the confederacy. But they still persisted, with suspicious obstinacy, to withhold a copy of the treaty. A proposal

CHAP.
XVIII.

CHAP. sal was then made to appoint commissioners
XVIII. from all the cantons for the express purpose of administering a fresh oath of allegiance to the inhabitants of the Argau, who had lately manifested symptoms of disaffection. The Zurickers consented, without the smallest hesitation, and nominated their delegates accordingly.

Frederic having now amply indulged his vanity by an ostentatious progress through all the Suabian cities, was desirous of impressing the Swiss likewise with an exaggerated idea of his wealth and power. With this view he entered Zurich at the head of a splendid train of nobility. But the hospitality of the citizens, who vied with each other in magnificent balls, and sumptuous repasts, soon taught him to form a more favourable opinion of Helvetic manners, and to estimate the advantages of commercial prosperity at a higher rate. Neither did he find less cause to be satisfied with their behaviour in other respects, as the obsequious inhabitants, renouncing their native dignity, had the abject courtesy to adorn their caps with peacock's


cock's feathers,* that once odious symbol of Austrian supremacy.

CHAP.
XVIII.

Frederic was so much delighted with his reception, that he determined to continue his journey through the other cantons. No sooner was his intention known, than a congress was held at Zug, in order to consult what line of conduct it would be prudent to pursue under circumstances so unexpected. The enlightened patriot could not view with indifference the pageantry which to a progress professedly undertaken from mere motives of curiosity, gave an air of military triumph; nor could a thousand horse be admitted into the very heart of the country, without the adoption of more than common precautions. It was finally determined however to entertain the illustrious guest with every possible demonstration of respect; but at the same time to watch his actions with the most vigilant attention, and above all to reject every

* Mr. Planta relates a curious anecdote illustrative of the aversion of the Swiss to every thing which could recal the idea of Austrian supremacy, and which was extended even to the peacock. I. 306.

overture,

CHAP. overture, which was not made to them in
XVIII.  their collective capacity as a federative
commonwealth.*

Having received an oath of allegiance from the inhabitants of Rapperswyl, Frederic proceeded through Kyburg and Winterthur to Baden, enchanted with the double gratification of scenery the most picturesque, and homage the most reverential. At Konigsfelden, he made his oblations at the shrine of Albert, who perished by the hand of an assassin; prayed devoutly for the soul of his grandfather Leopold, who fell the victim of ambition, and implored the protection of the remorseless Agnes, whom superstition and flattery had metamorphosed into a saint. In his progress through the Argau, he beheld the castle of Hapsburg with a mixed feeling of pleasure and indignation. To see that venerable pile, once the proud abode of his renowned progenitor, degraded by republican owners, excited emotions too strong

* Bullinger.

even

even for habitual dissimulation wholly to suppress.

CHAP.
XVIII.

It would be trespassing too far on the reader's patience, minutely to describe the various instances of prodigal festivity, which enlivened his tour, though detailed with laborious dulness by the courtly writers of the day. At Berne, Friburg, Geneva, and Soleure the rude genius of invention was exhausted in devising amusements for the illustrious traveller. Whatever could gratify a mind by nature vain, and passionately addicted to external show, was prepared to greet his arrival, and divert his attention from more serious inquiries. The natives, unacquainted with the manners of a court, considered a smiling countenance as the unerring index of a benevolent heart, and fondly persuaded themselves that the auspicious moment was at length arrived, when they would be indulged to the fullest extent of their petitions. But upon renewing their request, they discovered with equal surprise and disappointment, that in the mouths of kings and ministers, expressions of kindness are frequently little more

VOL. III. F than

CHAP. XVIII. than unmeaning sounds. Unwilling to drive the confederates to despair, at a moment when he felt himself so entirely in their power, Frederic craftily eluded their demand; directing the deputies to meet him at Constance, where he promised to give them an impartial hearing. On his arrival at that place, having no longer cause to dissemble, he frankly declared that, "after mature deliberation, he had embraced the resolution never to ratify the acts in question, unless they should merit so signal a favour by the cession of the Argau; and by placing every thing on the exact footing upon which it stood at the conclusion of the *fifty year's truce*." This answer amounted in fact to a positive refusal, since every motive of sound policy forbade them to comply with a condition so unreasonable.

Meanwhile the Zurichers were gratified in many essential points by the emperor's interested munificence. The cession of Winterthur was formally ratified, and proved a source of universal exultation. The most positive assurances were also given, that the Suabian troops, in case of a rupture

ture with the other cantons (an event, CHAP. XVIII. which every day rendered more probable) should be ready to march on the shortest notice. With this view the garrison of Rapperswyl was reinforced, and strong entrenchments were thrown up on mount Hirzel. Thuring de Halwyl, an Austrian general of high reputation, being appointed by the senate of Zurich to the chief command, issued orders for his troops to lay aside the white cross, the characteristic emblem of the Helvetic league, and to assume the red cross of Austria*. Neither were the Schweitzers less attentive to measures of necessary precaution. They em-

* It can hardly be necessary to observe, that the custom of wearing crosses, as a military distinction, was introduced at the time of the Crusades. From that period, all the European powers had their appropriate colour, which was then the only species of military uniform. The French cross, like that of the Swiss, was white, the English blue, the Bavarian black, the Saxon yellow, the Austrian red. This fashion continued till the beginning of the sixteenth century, when *sashes* were substituted for *crosses*. (May, *Histoire Militaire de la Suisse*, III. xxxii.)

F 2

bodied

CHAP. bodied their militia, and despatched them
 XVIII. to the frontiers without loss of time.*

During this state of suspense, the neutral cantons were indefatigable in their endeavours for the restoration of peace. But the jealousies on both sides were too deeply rooted, to admit of any mediator but the sword. The situation of Zurich was now materially changed, and her pride kept pace with her fortune. Confident in the support of a power whose triumph must have given a fatal wound to freedom, she bade defiance to her enemies, and positively rejected every overture toward a reconciliation, except on terms of her own prescribing.

As it was no longer doubtful that, in the event of a rupture, all the confederated republics would unite against her, it was the main object of Frederic's policy to conciliate those states, which derived importance from their situation; and whose union with the Helvetic people, being sub-

Tschudi, XII.

ject

ject to certain restrictions, by no means CHAP. suited the ambition of men aspiring to un- XVIII. limited equality. With this intent he paid court to the Appenzellers, exhorting them to break a treaty, which he artfully represented as in the highest degree partial and unjust. But his hopes were blasted by the following characteristic answer:

“ The liberties of Appenzel,” said the honest mountaineers, “ were established
 “ by the aid of the federative cantons,
 “ who generously admitted us into their
 “ alliance, when we had nothing to offer
 “ in return but our swords. Under such
 “ circumstances, it could not be expected
 “ that we should enjoy all the rights of the
 “ original members, on a footing of perfect equality. The conditions, to which
 “ we then subscribed, are to the full as
 “ advantageous as we were entitled to
 “ claim, and they have been productive of
 “ essential benefit to our country. Rude
 “ and unlettered as we are, and strangers
 “ to the nice discriminations of political
 “ justice, in gratitude and integrity we
 “ will yield to none, And we should esteem

CHAP. " ~~term~~ ourselves unworthy to bear the
 XVIII. " name of men, could the temptations of
 " interest induce us to abandon our an-
 " cient friends, to whose glorious exertions
 " we are indebted for our liberty, that first
 " of human blessings."*

This decision excited the most flattering expectations in the breasts of the confederates, and led them to propose to the Appenzellers a more intimate union, as an inducement to join in the war. But that gallant people, who had so nobly rejected the bait of imperial favour, were equally insensible to republican seduction. They expressed the sincerest regret, that any dissensions should prevail among the different members of the confederacy; but at the same time, under the conviction that they were totally unable to determine respecting the pretensions of either party, " They resolved to preserve the strictest neutrality." This answer, dictated by the soundest policy, proved equally displeasing to all, but was particularly resented

* Tschudi.

by

by the Schweitzers, who persuaded them-
selves that the friends of freedom should
be exclusively the friends of Schweitz.

CHAP.
XVIII.
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The troops were already in motion in
the vicinity of the lake, and by their dif-
ferent dispositions seemed to indicate that
some enterprise of importance was in agi-
tation. Reding, to whom the partiality of
his fellow-citizens had committed the con-
duct of the war, observing that several
companies of the enemy were suddenly
withdrawn from the neighbourhood of Rap-
perswyl, commenced hostilities by an at-
tack upon the bridge, which he completely
destroyed.

1433.

Mortified at an event, which cut off all
communications with the opposite shore,
the garrison resolved by an effort of mag-
nitude to retrieve their character, and un-
der the advantage of a cloudy night, cross-
ing the lake in boats, surprised a party of
their adversaries at Freyenbach. As soon
as Reding was informed of this disaster, he
detached a body of light armed troops
with orders to watch the motions of the
Austrians, but upon no account, if they

F 4

found

CHAP. found them superior in numbers, to risk
 XVIII. a battle. The impetuosity of his soldiers, however, was not to be restrained. On coming up with the hostile column, they instantly rushed to combat. Twice did they get possession of the village, and twice were they repulsed with considerable loss. But nothing could induce them to abandon the contest. Retiring to an eminence, they maintained their ground, till reinforcements arrived from the camp: when they returned to the charge with renewed vigour, and compelled the Austrians to fly with precipitation to their boats.*

This advantage, trifling as it was, proved of great service to the victors; not only by giving additional lustre to their arms, but also by drawing over to their interest, those states whose fluctuating councils obeyed the influence of fortune. The troops of Lucerne and Unterwalden marched immediately to the defence of Zug, and encamped at Baar; while the militia of Glaris

* Tschudi, Bullinger.

occupied an advantageous position near the lake, in order to cover Usnach.

CHAP.
XVIII
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A numerous and well appointed cavalry were by this time assembled within the walls of Zurich, which they at once protected and furnished. Aware of the dearth of provisions inevitably consequent upon a protraction of hostilities, Stussi was anxious to bring the contest to a speedy issue; and learning that the enemy was in daily expectation of reinforcements, he determined to hazard a battle without loss of time. Putting himself at the head of six thousand men, the greater part of whom were Austrians, he advanced without interruption to Baar, where to his inexpressible surprise, he discovered the united banners of Uri, Lucerne and Unterwalden. Dismayed at a sight, which not only frustrated every hope of success, but even rendered his own situation precarious, he endeavoured to save his army, by a hasty retreat.

The prospect of a flying enemy inspired the allies with so much confidence, that they resolved to avail themselves of the  
general



CHAP. general panic, and to storm the lines of  
XVIII. Hirzel. The attempt was dangerous; as the  
position, naturally difficult, was strengthened by works constructed with tolerable skill. Yet deeming nothing too arduous for valour to overcome, the Schweitzers flew to the assault with a degree of intrepidity, which rendered them irresistible; by every species of personal invective worked themselves into a savage fury, which nothing but the inveteracy of civil discord could have been able to inspire. Meanwhile the Zurickers kept up a heavy fire from their ponderous arquebuses, accompanied by an incessant shower of missile weapons. But the assailants were goaded to madness. Regardless of personal safety, they leaped into the trenches, drove the enemy before them with their pikes and halberds, and in a few minutes became masters of a camp, which on the scientific principles of defence might have been deemed impregnable.

It cannot be supposed that a victory so decisive could be gained without considerable loss. But so contradictory were the statements

statements published on both sides, with regard to the amount of their respective forces, and to the number of the slain, that it is scarcely possible to form an accurate judgment of either.\* It seems however no exaggeration to assert, that the greater part of those who escaped, owed their safety to the darkness of the night.

No sooner were the conquerors in possession of the hostile camp, than they stood aghast at the havoc which they had made. It was Helvetic blood which had flowed so copiously; it had flowed from the veins of those, whom the ties of nature, or the endearments of youthful friendship once rendered the objects of their fondest affection. No shouts of triumph an-

\* According to the account published by the magistrates of Zurich, the whole of their force consisted of little more than six hundred men, half of whom were left dead on the field of battle; while the enemy's column was four thousand strong, of whom eight hundred fell. On the contrary, the strength of the assailants is reduced, by their own statements to three thousand, and that of their adversaries increased to seventeen hundred. Of the latter, they add, five hundred were slain, of the former only seventeen.

nounced

CHAP.  
XVIII.  


nounced their mournful victory; no songs of exultation insulted the fallen foe. At length the rising sun burst on the scene of slaughter, discovering the mangled corpses of brothers, sons, and fathers strewed promiscuously over the plain. A sight like this effaced in an instant every sentiment of compassion toward those by whose hands they had fallen. Giving way to the implacable dictates of revenge, they swore to appease their indignant shades, and proceeded to fulfil the nefarious vow, by ravaging the adjacent country with the most licentious ferocity. Meanwhile, unwilling to acknowledge the superiority of their vanquishers, the fugitives complained loudly of treachery, accusing both the Austrians and the senate of cowardice and neglect. These complaints, however, were of a nature to excite but little surprise. For suspicion and jealousy are the natural growth of all coalitions. Interest perhaps may, for a short time, direct their united efforts toward the attainment of a common object; but it will prompt them, in an equal degree, to attend exclusively to their own advantage,

advantage, should it ever come in competition with that of their ally. Neither could it be expected, that in their individual characters more perfect harmony would prevail. The pride of birth, which is no where idolized with more extravagant worship than at the Austrian court, was little calculated tamely to endure the opinionated arrogance of wealth. On the other hand a people, who regarded wealth as the only just criterion of human distinctions, were not likely patiently to support the still less palpable superiority of birth.

The treaty having thus incurred popular animadversion, its opponents who had hitherto been terrified into silence, greedily seized the present occasion of giving vent to their indignation. The margrave of Hochberg, on the contrary, who commanded the auxiliary troops, threw the whole blame on the citizens, attributing the defeat to want of discipline and internal dissensions; though his own behaviour was liable to censure, for having neglected to defend the lines of Hirzel with a more powerful force.

The

CHAP.  
XVIII

The loss sustained by the republican army was quickly replaced by volunteers, whom the thirst of glory, or of plunder attracted in crowds to their standard. But they wanted resolution to undertake the siege of Zurich; the capture of which would have terminated the war by a single blow. Adopting a system more analogous to their limited resources, they contented themselves with ravaging the open country, and intercepting the conveyance of provisions. Neither Berne, nor Solothurn, had yet taken a decisive part. They lamented indeed, with all the sensibility of patriotism, the deep wound which the confederacy had received from the unnatural conduct of one of her children; but they shuddered at the idea of embruing their hands in fraternal blood. Perceiving, however, that the exhortations of friendship, though delivered in the mildest tone of persuasion, were treated with neglect; they deemed it expedient to arm; flattering themselves that their arguments might acquire additional weight, when delivered by a people with weapons in their hands.

The

The Bernese army had scarcely encamp-  
ed on the banks of the Reuss, when de-  
puties arrived from Schweitz to implore  
their assistance, representing the calamities  
which threatened the cause of freedom; if  
they should be left in their present defence-  
less state to the mercy of Austria and her  
perfidious ally. In terms not less affecting  
than energetic, they expatiated on the  
common danger, recalling to the recollec-  
tion of the commanders the memorable  
victory of Laupen, in which they alone of  
all the Helvetic people, had participated.  
“Is it possible,” said they in a style of  
high animation, “that an hereditary  
“friendship, more permanent than any  
“which interest can inspire, should not  
“subsist between us? You have undoubt-  
“edly been told by your fathers, for it  
“was a theme upon which age delighted  
“to dwell, with what demonstrations of  
“joy our ancestors were hailed, when  
“their banners were seen from the towers  
“of Berne. Neither can you be strangers  
“to the expressions of regard, in which  
“they were addressed by the immortal

CHAP.  
XVII.

"Erlach on the field of battle, while their  
swords still smoked with Austrian blood.  
"So long," exclaimed the chieftain, "as  
the result of this glorious day shall be re-  
recorded, in the hearts of a grateful people,  
the two republics shall be closely united in  
bonds of affection! Ye sons of those, who  
conquered at Laupen, it is now our turn  
to supplicate for aid. The ambitious  
projects of our hereditary foe will at  
length be realized, unless you stand  
forth in our defence. United with you,  
we shall face the danger with full per-  
suasion that the spot, where we meet  
the mercenary hosts of despotism, will  
be rendered as memorable in Helvetic  
story, as the plains of Laupen.\*"

So powerful an appeal to the passions  
could hardly be resisted by men, who were  
not less alive to the feelings of gratitude,  
than to the charms of glory. Without  
any of the cold formalities of council, after  
having declared their sentiments by un-  
animous shouts of approbation, they di-

\* Bullinger, XI. viii.

rected

rected their march toward Bremgarten, a CHAP. XVIII.  
 place of strength, which had imprudently sided with the opposite party. Cut off from all communication with the capital, and destitute of every prospect of relief, the garrison capitulated without opposition, on a promise of personal safety. Proceeding onward, the confederates next took possession of Baden, and subdued the whole of the adjacent country. Wherever they presented themselves, the gates were immediately thrown open, and their arrival was celebrated with the liveliest exhibitions of joy.

Being now undisputed masters of the field, they displayed their victorious banners in sight of Zurich; destroying the vineyards, the farms, and the villas in it's vicinity with a savage fury unknown since the days of Attila. Convinced however by repeated efforts, that neither insults nor threats could tempt the enemy to quit their ramparts, and being reduced to distress from want of provisions, they deemed it expedient to terminate the campaign.\*

\* Tschudi, xii.



CHAP.  
XVIII.

The convent of Ruti had served for ages as a place of burial to the most illustrious families of Helvetia, and was consequently regarded with peculiar veneration in an age when philosophy had not yet dispelled every virtuous prejudice from the mind. Yet so violent was the animosity which now prevailed, that notwithstanding these prejudices the sacred character of religion no longer served as a protection against the calamities of war. In their way to Schweitz, a detachment of the army happened to pass under the walls of the monastery. Curiosity, or devotion, led them to enter the gates. The trophies, commemorating the achievements of ancient warriors, instantly kindled their indignation. They were the rewards of men, whose principles were inimical to the cause of freedom! They were a tribute offered by flattery to pride, at a season when all the distinctions of birth and favour should cease for ever! With such reflections having animated each other, till every sentiment of religious awe was extinguished in their breasts, they rushed with faratic fury through

through the echoing cloisters, and destroyed every thing that presented itself to their impetuosity. All the ornaments with which vanity, or superstition had decorated that venerable asylum, disappeared in an instant. Relics were torn from the shrines of their saints ; and the banners suspended over the tombs of departed greatness, were borne off in impious triumph. Even death itself was no longer an exemption from insult. The graves themselves were opened, and the bones of decaying heroes dragged from their hallowed mansions, to be exposed to the coarse mockery of an infatuated mob. No sooner, however, did the fervor of passion subside, than the perpetrators shrunk from the view of the enormities, which they had committed ; and, in order to expiate them, undertook a pilgrimage to Einsiedlen. So strangely framed is the human mind, and so nearly are cruelty and superstition allied to each other !

The situation of Zurich was now truly deplorable. The pompous promises of Austria had in a great measure failed, and

CHAP. notwithstanding her repeated assurances  
XVIII. of speedy and effectual succour, no reinforcements arrived. In this state of abandonment, the margrave was reduced to the humiliating necessity of remaining within her walls, a tranquil spectator of the surrounding devastation. Convinced by fatal experience that no reliance could be placed upon the word of Frederic, whose resources were totally inadequate to his projects, he addressed himself successively to the other princes of Germany. His arguments however failed to awaken them to a sense of the common danger. They beheld with indifference the event of a contest, in which they were not personally concerned; or they rated their services at a price so extravagant, that prudence compelled him to decline the purchase. Satisfied therefore that he had nothing to depend upon, except his own activity, he confined himself to a desultory war; endeavouring by unexpected attacks to annoy the enemy, and thus to revive the drooping spirits of his own party. But the vigilance of the confederates defeated all

all his projects. An attempt to recover Bremgarten completely failed; nor was a second, to surprise the town of Wyl, attended with better success. His repeated miscarriages at length drew from Halwyl the sarcastic remark, "That the walls of the council-chamber, though magnificently decorated, were too *thin* for safety; as nothing was debated within them, which did not instantly penetrate to the public ear."

CHAP.  
XVIII.

These exertions, however, though not successful, taught the allies that they had been guilty of an unpardonable error in quitting the field. With an ardent desire to retrieve the past, they assembled their refreshed forces at Hedingen, and collected supplies for another campaign. Here they were met by a solemn embassy from the ecclesiastical synod, then sitting at Bale, with offers of mediation; the venerable fathers vainly flattering themselves, that their sacred character might give authority to their admonitions. So far however were they from effecting their benevolent purpose, that they were not only heard with

G 3

neglect,

CHAP. neglect, but compelled also to become  
XVIII. spectators of the sanguinary combat, which  
took place on the following day.

At the early dawn, the troops after a hasty meal began their march toward Zurich. As they ascended Mount Albis, they found the passes guarded by small detachments of Austrians, who had been stationed there with positive orders to maintain them to the last extremity. But they were attacked with so much vigour and intrepidity, that they were almost instantly dislodged. This unexpected disaster entirely disconcerted the Austrian plans, and occasioned universal alarm. Terrified at the near approach of danger, the burghers, without distinction of age or rank, flew to arms. A body, acting under the impulse of undisciplined zeal, is calculated rather to excite confusion, than to inspire confidence. Halwyl was aware of the difficulties of his situation, and exerted every effort to direct their impetuosity toward useful service. But the ardor of his troops could no longer be restrained. Equally inattentive to the authority of  
their

their commander, and to their own security, they considered every order issued to moderate their fury, as the effect of treachery or of fear. CHAP.  
XVIII.

Perceiving therefore that it was impossible to avoid a battle, Halwyl drew up his forces in a formidable position behind the Syl. Scarcely however was this project executed, when the vehemence of the citizens again frustrated his design. Urged forward by destiny, they crossed the river, and taking possession of a chapel dedicated to St. James, resolved in that exposed situation, to await the enemy.

From this imprudent movement Reding, who commanded the Helvetic army, anticipated an easy victory. By a rapid evolution he instantly changed the whole plan of attack, and by seizing upon Wiedikon, not only secured an important post, but threatened the flank of the enemy.\*

\* Reding is accused by the adverse party of having employed a stratagem, which decided the fortune of the day. A body of his troops, whom he had ordered to assume the *red cross* of Austria, were suffered to advance without opposition, and broke in upon the enemy's line, before the artifice was discovered. This

CHAP. XVIII. A skirmish ensued between the van of the confederates and a body of Austrian cavalry, in which the latter being worsted, were compelled to fall back in disorder. Elated with this success, the Schweitzers rushed forward to the attack; while the Zurickers, who had formed behind a thick hedge, discharged a volley of arrows as they approached: this position was still capable of a strenuous defence, had not the dastardly behaviour of the horse, in whose superior prowess great confidence was reposed, created a general alarm. Even the bravest leaders of the municipal bands, though incapable of fear, gave way to the suspicion of treachery, and already considered their cause as desperate; while the rabble, seized with a sudden panic, threw down their arms and fled in confusion towards a bridge, which led directly to the gates. From the narrowness of

circumstance is represented by the Swiss historians, as highly derogatory from the glory of the victors. We are inclined however to ask, with the Roman poet, *Dolus an virtus quis in hoste requirat?*

the passage, numbers were compelled to leap into the stream, to avoid perishing by the hands of their pursuers. Unfortunately for the fugitives, at this critical moment, a train of women came out of the city, laden with refreshments for their exhausted friends. From the nature of the ground neither party could recede, but rushing forward with all the violence of despair, augmented the danger by the very means which they used to avoid it. In this wretched struggle for existence, many were trodden to death before the entry could be cleared, while hundreds perished by the sword of the enemy.

Stussi beheld the universal dismay with a mixed sensation of shame and resentment. He was consciously the author of the public calamity; and he felt that to live, was incompatible with glory. But a strong sentiment of patriotism, which no reverse of fortune could extinguish, whispered to his breast, that he had still a sacred duty to discharge; and that to rush with desperate fury on the lances of the conquerors, would



CHAP. XVIII.] would be inconsistent with the obligations which he owed to his country. Determined to fall as became a hero, he placed himself at the entrance of the bridge, defending the passage with his ponderous battle-axe, while in a voice of thunder, he commanded the natives to turn and face the foe. But neither tears, nor reproaches availed. In vain he alternately supplicated, and threatened.—His age was no longer an object of respect; his former services were forgotten. For a long time, though singly opposed to a host, he undauntedly maintained his post; securing a retreat to many, who must have otherwise fallen in the general carnage, till by a glorious death he in some measure expiated the errors of his former counsels.

The circumstances which attended his fall, are variously related; neither is it possible, at this distance of time, to decide between contending historians. According to some, he perished by the hand of a Lucerner, covered with wounds; others assert, that the fatal blow was given by one of his fellow citizens, who incensed at his rebuke, struck him to the ground with a halbert, exclaiming,

exclaiming, "Thy rashness, old man, has brought thy country to this distress; but by the God of Justice, thou shalt not survive her fall!"

Every thing was now given up for lost. The Zurickers fled in various directions, and personal safety was the only object of consideration. Availing themselves of the universal consternation, a body of the confederates penetrated into the town, where after making themselves masters of all that was valuable, they set fire to several houses. Rudolph Koenig of Glaris, having overtaken the standard-bearer of Zurich, slew him in the streets, and bore off the flag in triumph. Upon reaching the gate, he found it shut. A woman, who observed that amidst the general confusion the security of the city was totally neglected, had let down the portcullis. At this critical moment, Koenig arrived. To him the loss of life appeared indifferent, provided he could secure the banner, as a lasting memorial of his heroism. Hastily he mounted the rampart, and anxiously he gazed around with the hope of discovering some trusty friend,

CHAP.  
XVIII.

CHAP. friend, to whom he might confide the sacred  
XVIII. trophy. Among the foremost of the approaching troops, a native of Glaris appeared. Him, Koenig entreated by signs, to come nearer to the walls. Not an instant was to be lost; the Zurickers were hurrying forward, to retrieve their disgrace; he threw the standard to his comrade, gave a shout of rapture at having thus secured his triumph, then turning toward the enemy, he fell covered with wounds and with glory.

No sooner had victory decided in favour of the Helvetic troops, than they gave scope to every malignant passion which revenge could inspire. With savage exultation they beheld the flames consume the suburbs, and the magnificent church dedicated to St. Stephen. And by the light reflected from the blazing cottages, proceeded during the gloom of night in the dreadful business of devastation. From Kilchberg to the walls of Zurich, every village was on fire. Rieden and Wiedikon were reduced to ashes. Every feeling of humanity was benumbed, and the dying  
and

and the dead became equally the sport of the conquerors.

CHAP.  
XVIII.

Whatever had been the errors of Stussi's administration, he had so far atoned for them by his death, as to deserve the meed of valour from the hands of the victors. With funereal pomp they should have consigned his mangled body to an honourable grave. But no sooner was the disfigured carcase discovered amidst heaps of slain, than with a ferocity unparalleled in *ancient* Christendom, it was torn in pieces and devoured by the remorseless cannibals; while those, who were deprived of a share in the infernal banquet, besmeared their faces or sketched indecent figures on the walls of the chapel with his blood. Let us draw a veil over this atrocious scene, nor wound the breast of humanity by a continuation of the disgusting recital\*.

Such was the destiny of a man, whose talents would have entitled him to the ad-

\* *Æneas Sylvius* informs us, that the victors made benches and tables of the mangled bodies where they sat and sang in savage triumph, while they feasted on the hearts of the slain.

miration

CHAP. miration of posterity, had they been devoted  
 XVIII. ed to the cause of justice. But the gratitude of his adopted country (for he was born in the canton of Glaris) bore lofty testimony to his merits by erecting a statue to his memory, armed and accoutred, as he marched to battle on that day of destruction\*.

According to their own computation, the loss of the Zurickers exceeded three hundred men, half of whom were knights† or

\* Bullinger, Rhan.

† Malleus has given a description of this battle, of which he was an involuntary spectator. The following abstract of part of his curious narrative is not unworthy of notice, as it exhibits at once a monument of perverted taste, and a satisfactory specimen of Helvetic literature. His work is entitled, *Processus judiciarius coram Omnipotente Deo, inter nobiles et Thuricenses, cum complicitibus ex altera parte*. It is dedicated to the emperor, and is strongly tinged with that unforgiving spirit, which is characteristic of the church of Rome. The Zurickers, who fell in this memorable engagement, being introduced into Paradise by the angel Michael, prefer an accusation against the other members of the Helvetic confederacy. Charlemagne being appointed judge, commands all the lawyers in Heaven to attend his tribunal; but after a strict search, only one can be found. The emperor is constrained, therefore, to have  
 citizens

citizens of distinguished rank. Of the Austrians fell nearly an equal number. Albert de Busnang, a wealthy nobleman, who served in the imperial cavalry, being wounded by the hand of a Schweitzer, offered a considerable ransom for his life. But the victorious peasant was deaf to his prayer, retorting with sarcastic mockery, "that if he were so rich as he pretended to be, he could have no business there."

On the side of the victors scarcely any were killed; a circumstance which is easily explained, when we consider that from the commencement of the action the vanquished had fled without almost attempting to resist.

With dismay the senate looked forward

recourse to the clergy, who (in conformity perhaps rather to the precepts of Christian charity, than to the practice of most ecclesiastical courts,) desire him to summon the accused, in order that they may be heard in their own defence. A proclamation is accordingly made, requiring them to appear; but none obeying, the complaint of the Zurickers is admitted, and ample satisfaction promised.—In consequence of this assurance, a saint is immediately despatched to conduct the Dauphin to the banks of the Birs, there to become the avenger of their wrongs,

CHAP. XVIII. to all the horrors of a siege; while their fears were still farther aggravated by the alarming symptoms of discontent which manifested themselves among the lower classes. The government having wholly lost the public confidence, saw no hope of safety, except in throwing themselves with unreserved confidence into the arms of Austria, and investing the margrave with unlimited power. The experiment was dangerous, but fortunately for the republic, that chieftain showed himself worthy of the important and delicate trust. Every possible exertion was made to increase the means of defence, and to give courage and animation to the desponding citizens. These efforts were crowned with success. The confederates drew off their forces from the adjacent country; and invested Rapperswyl, the siege of which they regarded as a less difficult undertaking than that of the capital.

Notwithstanding their repeated promise of support, neither Berne nor Soleure had hitherto taken the field. Upon learning, however, the brilliant fortune of their allies, they

they issued immediate orders to their troops to march ; apprehensive of forfeiting their claim to a portion of the plunder, unless they shared in the toils by which it was to be acquired. But their procrastination had already proved highly detrimental to the common cause ; as the Zurickers were recovered from their panic, and the ardor of the Schweitzers was considerably cooled.

The siege of Rapperswyl, therefore, proceeded slowly. A breach being at length effected, a summons was sent to the commander, to which he returned a disdainful answer. The margrave, however, convinced of the impossibility of a long resistance, endeavoured through the medium of the neutral states once more to renew the negociation. But the enemy, haughtily declared, that they would never consent to a truce, except on condition--First, "that all foreign troops, without distinction of rank or nation, should instantly evacuate the territory of Zurich :--And secondly, that till a definitive treaty was signed they should themselves retain possession of all their conquests." To these rigorous de-

VOL. III.

H

mands

CHAP.  
XVIII.



**CHAP. XVIII.** mands Zurich was by her distresses compelled to accede, and an armistice was in consequence concluded\*.

This treaty was received by the public with every mark of disapprobation. At Zurich, the people complained that the dignity of the commonwealth had been sacrificed by disgraceful concessions; while the brave garrison of Rapperswyl revolted at the idea of being used as a plea for national dishonour, affirming with noble enthusiasm, "that they desired no protection, beside "that which their swords could supply." Neither Berne, nor Soleure, were included in the truce; but, on the very day of its ratification, their united forces invested Lauffenbourg, which was defended by a party of Austrians. This enterprise, however, not proving successful, they soon afterward acceded to the treaty.

During the whole of this memorable contest, the transactions of Switzerland evince the inefficacy of all attempts toward a pacification, until the spirit of animosity, which

\* Tschudi, ib.

first gave rise to hostilities, shall have entirely subsided. Overtures may be made; plenipotentiaries may meet, and congresses may assemble; but conferences and memorials will serve no better purpose than to dupe a nation, when it is for the interest of ministers to conceal their malice under the specious veil of moderation.

Such, precisely, was the case with respect to the Helvetic governments. Both sides were equally desirous of disguising their ambitious projects, while both were equally remiss in observing the conditions which served as the basis for peace, and for the maintenance of which their faith had been so recently and so solemnly pledged.

Meanwhile the margrave availed himself of this momentary calm, to solicit support from the different members of the Germanic body; representing, in the most striking colours, the imprudence and folly of their inactivity. But the danger was remote, and man usually regards only impending evils. Personal misfortune is alone sufficient to teach the despot, that the triumphs

CHAP. of freedom must ultimately lead to his de-  
 XVIII. struction.

Frederic indeed was sensible of the danger, but the contracted state of his finances prevented him from following the suggestions of prudence. Finding, however, from repeated attempts to awaken the jealousy of the German princes, that erroneous principles of economy had rendered them blind to their real interests, and that no remedy could be expected, except from his own exertions, he resolved to direct all his thoughts and efforts to the prosecution of the Helvetic war.

Desirous likewise of alleviating the difficulties of the enterprise by diminishing the number of his foes, he addressed himself to the governments of Berne and Soleure; offering to submit all existing differences to a general diet, provided they would consent to a separate peace. But to this proposal they positively objected, accompanying their refusal with the express declaration, "that they would never enter into any treaty, except in conjunction with the other cantons."

Though peace was a blessing, of which CHAP. XVIII.  
the most sanguine began now to despair, 1444.  
yet in conformity to the pressing solicitations of the Suabian states, a congress was opened at Baden. But as neither side would consent to the most trifling concession, it soon became evident that no favourable result could be expected. The delegates of Zurich, with their accustomed pertinacity, insisted "on the right of forming such treaties as the interests of the commonwealth might require." They were so far humbled by adversity, however, that they offered to renounce their unpopular union with Austria, provided the confederates would engage to restore all the towns which they had taken in the course of the war."

The Schweitzers, on the contrary, declared "that they would listen to no proposals, till that alliance was dissolved." Though justly offended at the haughty tone assumed by the deputies of Schweitz, the delegates from Zurich were still unwilling to break off a treaty, on the success of which the salvation of their country seemed now

CHAP. to depend. They accordingly requested  
XVIII time to consult the senate, and returned to  
Zuric for farther instructions. Having laid  
before the government a detailed account  
of their proceedings, a warm debate en-  
sued, in which the advocates for peace  
would in all probability have prevailed, had  
not their deliberations been suddenly in-  
terrupted by a popular tumult.

Apprehensive of an event, which would  
at once have frustrated all their ambitious  
projects, the partisans of Austria took ad-  
vantage of the general ferment to excite  
the people to revolt, under pretence that  
the glory and independence of the state  
would be sacrificed to the fears of a feeble  
government, unless they interposed to snatch  
it from impending disgrace. Excited by  
these insinuations, the mob broke into the  
council chamber, whence they expelled  
every member who had been represented  
as pacifically inclined; crying out, "that  
" their country was betrayed, and that it  
" was incumbent upon every honest citizen  
" to unite with them in it's defence\*.

\* Tschudi.

From

From complaints, as is usually the case, CHAP. XVIII.  
the insurgents proceeded to open violence, and dragged many of the senators into a dungeon, which had hitherto served as a place of confinement for the most atrocious criminals. Within a few days, these devoted victims were brought before a prejudiced tribunal, and two of the most obnoxious were sentenced to expiate their imputed guilt upon the scaffold. The Austrian faction having thus carried their point, all prospect of peace immediately vanished.

Hitherto the Appenzellers had steadfastly adhered to their judicious system of neutrality. But their resolution was at length overruled by the solicitations of their allies; and a detachment of five hundred men was in consequence sent to join the confederate army. Desirous of opening the campaign by some brilliant enterprise, they determined to undertake the siege of Grenchen. This place was naturally so strong, that had it been defended by an adequate number of troops, the attempt must have been fruitless; but its garrison consisted of no more than eighty one men, commanded in-

CHAP.  
XVIII.

deed by the gallant Landenberg, whose name is immortalised by his brave though unsuccessful defence. This officer, when summoned to capitulate by a force whose strength precluded every hope of effectual resistance, returned for answer, "that he had been placed by his country in a situation of danger, and that nothing should induce him to betray his honourable trust."

Convinced however that the town was untenable, he caused it to be set on fire, and retired to the castle, which was built upon a rock, and could not be taken by storm. Reding anticipated with indignation the wound his reputation would sustain, should he suffer a repulse from a handful of men; and secretly swore never to decamp, till he had rendered himself master of the place. But finding that no impression could be made upon the fortress by the regular modes of offence, he resolved to have recourse to mines, and to bury the garrison, if they refused to surrender, under its ruins. Landenberg had now done every thing that could be expected from a gallant

a gallant officer, and being fully satisfied that no attempt would be made for his relief, submitted to sacrifice his private feelings to the dictates of humanity. CHAP.  
XVIII.

The castle being now abandoned by the victors to the fury of a licentious soldiery, Reding immediately assembled a military council, composed of the chief officers of the army, for the express purpose of determining the fate of the prisoners. This vindictive man, whose hatred of Zurich was scarcely less implacable than that of Annibal toward Rome, was anxious by one intimidating instance of severity, to prevent all future resistance. Employing that execrable maxim, which forms a leading principle in the tyrant's code, and which is so frequently urged by degenerate minds as a palliative for every barbarity, he contended that in cases of this kind *rigour was mercy*; and that by punishing the rash defenders of Greiffensee, they would eventually prevent an useless effusion of blood. His opinion was fruitlessly combated by many of the members, who were struck with admiration at the hardihood of the foe;



CHAP. foe; and the fearless band of patriots was  
 XVIII. condemned to death for having honourably  
 discharged their duty to their country\*.

With a mixed sensation of indignation and surprise, Landenberg heard the cruel sentence, and resolved if possible to ransom his soldiers by the gratuitous sacrifice of his own life. Finding, however, that this generous behaviour excited no sympathy in the callous bosom of his judges, he turned with dignified composure toward his brave associates, and addressed them in the following words: "We have already  
 " convinced our enemies, my gallant  
 " friends, that we were insensible to their  
 " threats, when duty commanded us to  
 " resist; let us now by the unshaken  
 " constancy with which we bear our un-  
 " merited fate, compel them to blush at  
 " their injustice. The Almighty can wit-  
 " ness, that even at this awful moment,

\* Hedwig is accused by Bullinger, Stumpf, and Tschudi, of having violated his word, which was pledged to the garrison to spare their lives; and May, a writer of discrimination, gives entire credit to their assertion. (IV. xi.)

" when

“ when I stand on the brink of the grave, CHAP.  
 “ I would not for the worth of worlds XVIII.  
 “ exchange situations with my judges.  
 “ No; it is a thousand times better to  
 “ fall, the innocent victim of persecution,  
 “ than to stain our memory with such  
 “ atrocious guilt.”

Having thus spoken, he serenely offered his neck to the executioner, and perished as he had lived with glory. Sixty-two of his companions underwent a similar fate. Nor would a single man have been spared, had not the soldiers, incensed at the cruelty of their commanders, interceded for the rest in language which Reding himself thought it imprudent to resist.\*

Malleolus, a writer far more remarkable for credulity than discrimination, records many strange and supernatural appearances, which were seen on the spot where this bloody transaction was perpetrated, as proofs that the martyred Landenberg was endowed with those miraculous powers which are regarded by the church of Rome

\* May, ib.

CHAP. as the criteria of *beatification*. And with-  
XVIII. out admitting our belief of the facts, or attempting an elucidation of their causes, we may venture to affirm, that there are numerous saints in the papal calendar, who enjoy all the prerogatives of canonization, without possessing half so many claims to the homage of the virtuous and the wise.

During the siege of Greiffensee, detachments from the main army overspread the adjacent country, carrying terror and desolation wherever they appeared. In the course of these predatory expeditions, they took Freudenberg and Nidberg, both places of celebrity in the Helvetic wars, and at that time dependent on Austria. Contenting themselves however with the nominal sovereignty, the disinterested victors left in the fruition of all their revenues the house of Brandis, to whom they had been transferred by a recent contract. An instance of justice, not often to be met with in the annals of destruction!

After razing the town and castle of Greiffensee, the army resumed it's former position

position at Kloten. Here many days were spent in unavailing debates respecting their future operations ; so that, before any plan was decisively arranged, provisions again began to grow short, and a second time compelled them to close the campaign.

No sooner was certain intelligence brought that the enemy had retreated, than the Zurickers began to act offensively, determined to employ this unexpected respite in such a manner, as to give at least a transient lustre to their arms. Detachments of cavalry were accordingly sent to scour the country, which created a general alarm. The confederates were therefore constrained again to take the field, and march to the relief of Regensberg, from which the enemy retired at their approach. Undisputed masters of the open country, they now resolved in a council of war to proceed with the whole army against Zurich, and endeavour, if possible, by one decisive blow to terminate the contest.

Never had the situation of Zurich been more critical. All the surrounding territory was in the hands of the foe. Rapperswyl  
and

CHAP.  
XVIII.

CHAP. and Winterthur, closely invested, suffered  
 XVIII. severely from famine. Every avenue to  
 the city was occupied, and all communication by land completely cut off.

The besieged on their part, omitted no precautions which prudence could suggest or energy carry into effect. Many houses in the suburbs were pulled down, in order that the materials might be employed in repairing the fortifications. But their troops, by sickness rendered incapable of facing the enemy, were forced to remain ingloriously within the walls. Observing however that the Helvetic artillery was negligently served, and that the besiegers made little progress, the citizens were gradually stimulated to exploits of greater hazard. A confederacy,\* by no means uncommon in the days of chivalry, was formed among the principal burghers, which originally consisted of sixty members, but progressively embraced a larger number. Regardless of danger, they ven-

\* Tschudi. This association is celebrated in Helvetic story by the appellation of *Becht*, or 'the Ram.'

tured

tured on ~~the~~ most perilous enterprises; CHAP. XVIII.  
 harassing the besiegers by frequent sallies,  
 destroying their provisions and military  
 stores, or rendering their cannon unfit for  
 service. Combined with judgment, and  
 executed with rapidity, their efforts were  
 generally crowned with success; but if,  
 at any time, they found themselves op-  
 posed by a superior force, they instantly  
 retreated with a degree of celerity which  
 baffled pursuit.\*

The confederates, having promised them-  
 selves an easy conquest, soon grew dis-  
 gusted with the tedious operations of a  
 siege; and began to murmur at the hard-  
 ships to which they were exposed. Con-  
 vinced of the impossibility of keeping their  
 troops together for any length of time, and  
 unwilling to relinquish an opportunity  
 which might never recur, the commanders  
 embraced the desperate resolution of as-  
 saulting the city by night. But the walls  
 were defended with so much skill and in-  
 trepidity, that after having displayed the

\* *Mag.* III. iii.

CHAP. most undaunted courage, the besiegers  
XVIII. were repulsed with considerable loss.

Meanwhile, the margrave had acquainted the emperor with his distress, and received in return the most positive assurances of speedy support. Had Frederic trusted solely to his own resources, the situation of that chieftain would have been desperate indeed. But in spite of poverty and indolence, fortune for once stood his friend, and raised a champion in his cause, to whose unexpected interference Zurich was indebted for her safety.


Charles VII. king of France, lay at this time before Metz with a numerous army, for the purpose of reducing the rebellious burghers under the legitimate authority of his friend and ally, the duke of Lorraine. In addition to his national troops, he maintained in his pay a large body of English, who having been long accustomed to the licentiousness of a camp, preferred mercenary service under a foreign standard to the more useful occupations of commerce and peace. The disorderly conduct of those ferocious bands having rendered them

them scarcely less formidable to their friends than to their foes, Charles, who no longer needed their assistance, was happy to transfer their venal valour to some other purchaser. Hence, he readily acceded to the emperor's proposal of taking them into his pay; and being equally desirous of providing employment for the ambition of his son, he willingly complied with the dauphin's\* request of commanding the expedition in person. Even before this project of the coalesced monarchs, however, could be brought to maturity, the confederates had received an unexpected blow.

In the course of the preceding pages, we have frequently found occasion to censure the despotic conduct of Berne toward every state, whose misfortune it was to be subject to her sway. But from her enormous power prudence naturally inferred the necessity of submission, till the propitious moment should arrive, when the oppressed might assert their rights with a

\* Afterwards Louis XI.



CHAP. fairer prospect of success. Among those  
XVIII.  most aggrieved by her injustice, were the powerful families of Baldeck and Falkenstein; both of whom were united to the republic by the equivocal tie of co-burghership.

Endowed by nature with undaunted courage, and a spirit sensible of the slightest injuries, Faulkenstein no sooner learned that the dauphin had actually begun his march, than he regarded the ruin of the Helvetic republics as inevitable; and determined, if possible, by his own exertions to accelerate their downfall.

The neglected state of Arau seeming to promise an easy conquest; he proposed, in an assembly of the disaffected barons, to attack it by night. The plan was immediately adopted; and failed only through one of those unforeseen contingencies, which so frequently baffle the calculations of war. Disappointed, but not discouraged, Faulkenstein resolved on a more hazardous enterprise; for he knew too well the vindictive spirit of the senate of Berne, to flatter himself with the possibility of  
pardon.

pardon. He now directed his march to-  
ward Bruck, a town in the Argau, but  
subject to their jurisdiction. The terms  
of familiar intercourse on which Falken-  
stein lived with the principal families of  
this place, procured him at all times a  
ready admission. He was also known to  
have been frequently employed by the  
Bernese in foreign negotiations, and in  
particular to have been the agent of a se-  
cret correspondence between them and  
the Austrian generals. Being therefore  
accustomed to visit the town at all hours  
of the night, he occasioned little surprise,  
when he demanded at the gates a passage  
for himself and a few attendants, whom  
he represented as ambassadors from the  
council of Bâle, but who were in reality  
commanders of note in the Austrian ser-  
vice. The officer on guard, being ac-  
quainted with Falkenstein, obeyed the sum-  
mons; and instantly received the reward  
of his credulity from the traitor's sword.  
Having thus rendered themselves masters  
of the bridge, the assailants maintained  
their ground, till a body of cavalry ar-

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rived.

CHAP. rived: The place was then given up to  
 XVIII. plunder; and on the following morning,  
 when lust and avarice were completely satiated, the inhuman conquerors set fire to the town, and retired with their booty, carrying with them several of the wealthiest citizens as hostages for their future safety.\*

Still however pretending to the reputation of a man of honour, Falkenstein endeavoured to gloss over the atrocity of his behaviour by an affectation of candor totally foreign to his real character. For this purpose, he despatched a confidential messenger to the senate of Berne with a declaration of war; but took especial care so to regulate his motions, that he should not arrive till the blow had been struck.

This deed of guilt excited general indignation throughout all the Helvetic league; nor were they slow to revenge it. Upon receiving intelligence of the fatal action, the inhabitants of Soleure flew instantly to arms, and surrounded the castle of Gosgen, the usual residence of the Falkenstein fa-

\* Tschudi.

mily, before the countess and her daughter had time to escape. These were now seized, and detained in vigorous captivity for many months, till they were at length exchanged for the citizens of Bruck, whom Falkenstein had imprisoned at Lauffenburg. Meanwhile another column invested Farnsburg, where the traitor had taken refuge in person. Yet although the besieging army amounted to four thousand men, and pushed on their operations with the greatest vigour, he found means to defend himself till the dauphin's arrival compelled the confederates to retire.\*

While the Helvetic troops were thus wasting their time in fruitless undertakings, Lewis advanced toward the frontiers of Switzerland, and threatened Bâle. His army, composed of the dregs and refuse of every European nation (though the majority are supposed to have been the hardy offspring of the British isles) had long supported themselves by indiscriminate plunder; but had been lately trained to a severer

\* May, III. xiii.

CHAP. discipline by the imposing talents of their  
XVIII. present leader, from whom they derived  
the distinctive appellation of ARMAGNACS.

The near approach of so formidable a force, avowedly devoted to the cause of despotism, revived the drooping spirits of the aristocratic faction, and tempted many of the disaffected barons to throw aside the mask. Even pope Eugenius himself is said to have indulged the most sanguine hopes, persuaded that the vicinity of the Gallic troops would operate more powerfully in prejudice of a reform, than all the intrigues, and all the treasures of Rome.

No sooner were the confederates apprised of the dauphin's march, than they detached a body of two thousand men, to reinforce the garrison of Bale. This was indeed an unpardonable error, and clearly shews that in all their enterprises they trusted solely to personal valour, without deigning to calculate the results of a defeat. At this important crisis, the Helvetic army amounted to upward of twenty thousand men, who were occupied in different sieges. In such a situation, an enlightened general would

would have regarded every object as subordinate to the paramount necessity of checking the progress of the French. He might possibly have so far indulged the vindictive vanity of his countrymen, as to have left behind him a force sufficient to continue the blockade of Zurich; but the remainder would have been sufficient, if properly disposed, to have kept the invaders in awe, and to have covered the frontiers without risking the hazard of a battle. Such, likewise, is represented to have been the advice of Reding; but his opinion was overruled by a great majority, who disdained every necessary precaution, as unworthy of men so often victorious over the hosts of Austria.\*

On the twenty-sixth of August, a melancholy day in the annals of Helvetia, the detachment, which was marching to the defence of Bale, fell in at Prattelen with the advanced guard of the enemy, and forced them to retire with loss. In proceeding onward to the place of their des-

\* May, II. i.

CHAP. tination, they routed another column at  
 XVIII. Muttenez, which was four times more numerous than themselves. Inebriated with this double success, they now looked down with contempt on Lewis and his mercenary bands.

Having at length reached the banks of the Birs, they were met by an officer from the garrison of Bale, who came to explain all the dangers that awaited them, should they rashly attempt to force a passage; the whole force of the enemy being advantageously posted on the opposite shore.

The passage of the Granicus presented not half the difficulties to Alexander, which this fearless troop had now to encounter. Yet they were already within sight of the towers of Bale, and to abandon the undertaking, at such a moment, was intolerably humiliating. What excuse could they allege to their countrymen encamped before Zurich, in exculpation of their cowardice, if they should turn their backs upon the foe in the full career of victory?

Such were the reflections that instigated  
 an

an attempt, the most desperate of any which human valour was ever known to undertake. Unanimous in the resolution to conquer or die, they plunged into the stream, regardless of the fire poured from the batteries of the French, who were already masters of the bridge, and had lined the heights with artillery; and though numbers perished at every discharge, they persevered with such heroic obstinacy, that they at last succeeded in obtaining a footing on the opposite bank. Nothing decisive, however, was yet achieved. A numerous army, commanded by experienced generals, and prepared to contest every inch of ground, opposed their farther progress. To advance, under such circumstances, to any other troops, would have appeared impracticable; but to them the necessity of fulfilling their duty, and not the difficulties which attended it's fulfilment, was the single point for consideration. The trumpets sounded to the charge. They rushed forward; whichever way they directed their fury, the hostile ranks were broken; but the chasms were instantly replenished with fresh

CHAP.  
XVIII.  
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CHAP. fresh battalions ; while other columns were
XVIII. marching to surround them, and cut off
their retreat.

The confederates, at length, grew sensible to their perilous situation. They found it impossible to penetrate the enemy's line. To retire was a service of equal danger, and destruction, though under a less consolatory form, awaited the attempt. By throwing down their arms, and imploring quarter, they knew they might purchase life. But their pride revolted at the ignominious alternative.

Resolved to perish like heroes, by a skilful manœuvre, they gained a burial-place belonging to an hospital dedicated to St. James, where they posted themselves behind a wall, which served for a breast-work. No position could be better adapted for the accomplishment of their purpose. Surrounded by lofty buildings, they hoped to maintain their ground, till they might possibly be relieved by a sally from the town. But their hopes and their projects were rendered abortive by the masterly dispositions of Lewis. A numerous artillery

lery was brought to bear on the hospital; CHAP.
XVIII. which in a short time set it on fire. Reduced to half their original force, they still rejected every offer to capitulate, and declared their resolution of defending the post to the last man. Such too was the spirit with which they fought, that when their missile weapons were exhausted, they drew out the arrows from their bleeding wounds, and shot them back upon the foe. Of two thousand combatants, sixteen only escaped. But when they rejoined the main army, after surmounting difficulties, which to ordinary men would have appeared insuperable, they were received by their comrades with contempt and insult, and narrowly escaped the punishments adjudged to cowards by the decree of Sempach.

From the works of contemporary writers it would be easy to select a thousand instances of magnanimity displayed by the Swiss in this memorable fight, many of which are corroborated by the unquestionable testimony of Æneas Sylvius, at that time

CHAP. time secretary to the council of Bale. The
XVIII.

following anecdote will, however, singly evince to what excess of ferocious courage the human mind is capable of attaining. On the evening subsequent to the battle, Burcard Monk, a zealous partisan of the house of Austria, was riding among the slain with his beaver up, contemplating the mangled bodies with an air of savage triumph, and amusing his companions with sarcastic jests. A rustic hero, who lay expiring under his wounds, beheld him with indignation. Though almost fainting through loss of blood, he raised himself on his knees; and grasping a ponderous stone, which fortune had placed within his reach, he hurled it with one mighty effort at the contemptuous foe. It smote him on the temple, and he fell motionless from his horse. Exhausted by the exertion, the dying peasant sunk gently down, and exclaiming with a smile, "my country is avenged!" he closed his eyes for ever*.

* This story is related by Tschudi and Bullinger.

The

The dauphin, it is said, was struck with admiration at the magnanimity of the Swiss; but it is difficult to believe his callous soul capable of so generous a sentiment. Far more congenial was it with his depraved disposition to calculate the advantages which France might derive from the energy of such allies, and to disguise the interested feeling under the specious veil of humanity. But whatever may have been his secret thoughts, the resistance which he had already experienced, fully convinced him of the impossibility of subjugating such a race of heroes. Desirous however of concealing the magnitude of his loss, he ordered the bodies of the slain to be burned on the field of battle. Yet in spite of this precaution, it was impossible for him to hide from the world at how dear a rate he had purchased his victory, which is supposed to have cost him at least ten thousand of his bravest troops*.

Apprehensive of the disaster of such an-

* May makes the loss still greater, (III. xv.)

other

CHAP.
XVIII

other triumph, Lewis drew off his forces toward Alsace, where he permitted them to indulge in every excess, by way of compensation for the plunder of Switzerland; while, by their rapacity and want of discipline, they gave Frederic ample cause to repent his imprudence in having called such ferocious auxiliaries to his aid.

The partiality of the French toward Eugenius was a fact too notorious to all the members of the council of Bâle, for them to remain unconcerned spectators of an event, which gave fresh animation to the foes of reform. But that no expedient might be left untried to avert the impending storm, a deputation, composed of prelates most distinguished for learning and virtue, attended the dauphin in his camp. Introduced into the royal pavilion, these venerable ambassadors represented, in the most affecting language, the hardships and dangers to which they were exposed from the common occurrences of war; and implored his compassion toward an assembly, whose labours might prove so highly interesting to the christian world.

Although

Although his plans were already decided, CHAP.
Lewis felt unwilling to lose so fair an XVIII.
opportunity of obtaining favour with the church, when he could procure it by no other sacrifice than that of truth. He accordingly received the holy fathers with the most courteous expressions of regard, assuring them that they had nothing to apprehend from a power, in whose estimation the claims of religion were paramount to every other. He farther added, that notwithstanding his intention to have pushed forward his victorious arms into the very heart of Switzerland, in consideration of their intercession, he would spare that devoted land; since no precautions, which the most enlightened prudence could employ, might prove a sufficient protection against the unavoidable calamities of war*.

No sooner were the confederates recovered from their first impressions of terror, than they began seriously to examine their resources, that they might prepare for vi-

* Tscharnier.

gorous

CHAP. gorous resistance. The conduct of the
 XVII. Lucerners at this disastrous crisis, did honour to the characters of their leaders. At a moment, when the rest of the Helvetic people were acting under the impulse of their fears, they provided with cautious foresight for the exigences of the times, and by their resolute opposition prevented the army from disbanding, till such arrangements had been taken for the defence of Switzerland, as the pressure of circumstances required.

No event of importance however occurred during the remainder of the year, which was consumed in preparations for the ensuing campaign. But the affairs of the confederates had assumed a different aspect from that, which they had hitherto worn. Their troops were no longer deemed invincible. Their frontier was open to attack. Animated also by their recent success, the partisans of Aristocracy renewed their secret intrigues, anticipating with undisguised delight the restoration of every feudal abuse. Many likewise of the German princes signified their intention of becoming

ing principals in the war, and were already taking active measures for commencing hostilities. But various circumstances, which it would be tedious to enumerate, conduced to frustrate their design, and to render the coalition far more formidable in idea, than it proved to be in reality.

The only power, indeed, which was in a situation to do effectual mischief, was no longer hostile. Through the mediation of the duke of Savoy (who had married Jolanda, the dauphin's sister) a treaty had been concluded between France and Switzerland, on the following terms: "That a good understanding should thenceforth subsist between the two countries; that a commercial intercourse should be established on the most liberal footing; that in the event of a rupture with any foreign power, that party, which was not engaged in actual hostilities, should employ its good offices in favour of its ally; and, finally, that they should compel those states, over which they exer-

VOL. IAI.

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CHAP.
XVIII.

CHAP. "cised authority, to a rigid observance of
 XVIII. "the foregoing articles."*

This treaty merits attention, on account of it's being the first step toward that intimate connection, which subsequently subsisted between France and Switzerland, and which owed it's origin to the policy of a prince, than whom there never existed a more inveterate enemy to the rights and liberties of mankind.

It would be a waste of time to detail every effort, which was ineffectually made, to engage the contending parties to sheath the sword. For neither Schweitz, nor Zazic, was yet sufficiently humbled to treat with that spirit of moderation, which can alone give effect to negotiations. A truce, however, was at length concluded by the exertions of the council of Bâle; and the season no longer admitting of offensive

* The duke of Savoy, the counts of Neufchatel and Arberg, together with the towns of Bâle, Bienne, and Soleure were specifically included, as allies of the contracting parties. (*Recueil de Traites, Bâle, 1772.*)

operations,

operations, they mutually agreed to suspend hostilities till the following spring.

With alternate success, and unabated fury, the war continued during the greater part of the ensuing year. Vessels, superior both in size and magnitude to any which had hitherto navigated the Alpine seas, contended in daily combats on the lake of Zurich. The town of Rapperswyl usually formed the point of contact, as the object of one party was to introduce, and that of the other to intercept supplies. For the purpose of acting with greater energy, Reding made use of a floating battery, composed of the trunks of lofty pines, lashed together with strong cables, and capable of bearing six hundred men. Small boats were employed in towing this unwieldy machine, celebrated in Helvetic story by the appellation of the *Bear*, till it anchored under the walls of Rapperswyl. Annoyed by so novel a mode of attack, the governor of the town at length devised the following stratagem for its destruction. Large iron hooks were fastened to a strong cable, and sunk exactly at the spot where

K 2

the

CHAP. the *Bear* was commonly moored. In a
XVIII.

few days it returned, and began to discharge its heavy artillery against the walls. Scarcely however was the attack commenced, when the crew perceived themselves to be gradually approaching the shore, attracted as it were by some magic power, which no efforts of theirs could resist. The ramparts were lined with spectators, exulting at the success, and menacing their victims with immediate death. But at the very moment when they were preparing to seize their prey, the cable broke. The scene was now totally changed; all hopes of capturing the hateful vessel were lost for ever; and the garrison was overwhelmed with rage and disappointment, while shouts of triumph, and of mockery, resounded from the rescued *Bear*.*

It is not less an object of curiosity, than of delight, to watch the progress of liberty, and to behold it diffusing from province to province plenty and happiness. This grate-

* Stumpf. Ballinger.

ful scene is nowhere exhibited more strikingly than in the annals of Helvetia. A coincidence of views and interests had given rise to an intimate connection between her different republics and the city of Bâle, which occasioned an important change in the constitution of that commercial town. Innovations were daily introduced into it's form of government, tending to encrease the rights of the people at the expense of the privileged orders. Many of the nobles, who had unwarily betrayed their political opinions by a premature declaration in favour of Austria, or had been detected in carrying on a clandestine correspondence with the dauphin, were condemned to exile; while those, whose estates were held as fiefs under any foreign prince, were suspended from the exercise of every public function, during the continuation of the war.

Availing themselves of the turbulence of the times, which relaxed every bond of social union, the inhabitants of Rheinfeld deposed their governor, and proclaimed a republican constitution. No sooner was

K 3

intelligence

CHAP. intelligence of this decisive step received
 XVIII. by the Helvetic diet, than troops were
 ordered to march to the assistance of the
 insurgents, who by their vigorous operations compelled the citadel to surrender, though duke Albert in person, at the head of a considerable force, lay within sight of the town.

In the course of this year, three attempts were made by the troops of Zurich to surprise Baden; which were all defeated by the vigilance and activity of the townsmen. An enterprise however, undertaken in the depth of winter to destroy the flotilla of the enemy, was attended with better success; as the *Bear*, with several smaller
 1446. vessels, was burnt. The naval superiority of Zurich was now established, nor could all the efforts of the confederates regain the ascendancy, which the negligence of their commanders had lost.

Scarcely any thing occurred before the conclusion of the war, that is worthy of the historian's notice; if we except an expedition avowedly planned by the active genius of the Appenzellers, and executed with their characteristic

characteristic intrepidity. A spot was selected, on the banks of the Rhine, for the general rendezvous of the forces, which (according to the established mode of Helvetic service) were to consist of contingents from every canton. Some unforeseen obstacle however having intercepted the punctuality of their friends, the Appenzellers, unwilling to remain inactive, resolved immediately to cross the river. Having effected the passage without opposition, they laid the adjacent country under contribution, and were returning homeward with a rich booty, when they met an Austrian column. It was on the festival of St. Friedelin, the patron of Glaris. On that day of course the Glarners, who had joined the Appenzellers on their march, believed themselves invincible; and when it was debated in a council of war whether they should risk an engagement against a superior force, or seek security among the neighbouring mountains, they were unanimous in their resolution not to retreat. The reasons indeed, alleged in support of this rash decision, would proceed absurdly

K 4

from

CHAP. from the mouth of a modern general ; but
XVIII. they were level with the understanding of those who heard them, and too congenial with their feelings to be heard without effect.

Instead of relying on the perfection of Helvetic discipline, the excellence of their position, or the courage of their men, to a miracle they trusted for victory. " It would be the excess of impiety," said the devout Glarners, " to question the power of our tutelary saint, and the excess of ingratitude to doubt his inclination. He will assuredly prove himself another Joshua, and deliver us with glory from the hands of the enemy." This extraordinary argument was considered by the army as the voice of inspiration, and infused into their breasts no less ardour, than if St. Friedelin himself had appeared at their head. Without a moment's hesitation they prepared for battle, and ordered the signal to be given for an immediate attack. Confident in their superiority of numbers, the Austrians had anticipated a bloodless victory. Upon perceiving there-
fore

fore the enemy in motion, their hearts mis-
gave them, and they fled in disorder, leav-
ing a thousand dead on the field.

CHAP.
XVIII.

Such was the last notable action of this bloody war. For while the contending parties were actively preparing for another campaign, the unconquerable perseverance of the council of Bâle put a final period to the contest. It might have been reasonably supposed, that so many fruitless attempts would have wearied out the spirit of Charity herself. Yet neither repulses, nor insults, nor ingratitude could exhaust the patience of men, whose duty it was to preach forgiveness and benevolence to their fellow-creatures. On their intercession congresses were successively held at Rheinfeld, Wadiswyl, and Constance; and from the general tone of these conferences it was evident, though nothing conclusive was determined, that all parties looked with secret anxiety to the termination of hostilities*.

Impelled by this discovery, the count of Montfort humanely undertook to manage

* Tschudi,

the

CHAP. the negotiation in person; and in order to
XVIII.

obviate all the impediments that might arise from the suggestions of pride or precedent, he invited the deputies from the belligerent cantons to meet in a vessel, on the lake of Zurich. Having carried a point so important to the accomplishment of his design, he expatiated in a long and pathetic discourse on the calamities which awaited their devoted country, in case the war should be protracted. By every argument calculated to move the feelings of men, to whom the precepts of religion and the duties of patriotism were equally sacred, he conjured them to put a period to a contest, which threatened destruction to the cause of freedom.


Terrified by this alarming picture, the hearts of the proudest began to relent; and an inclination toward mutual sacrifices was manifested on all sides. They consented to sit together at the same table, and to partake of the same repast. There they conversed, with the familiarity of old acquaintance, on the common interests of Switzerland, and suggested projects for the total removal of those obstacles, which still stood

stood in the way of peace. Nor did they finally separate, till a day had been fixed for a general congress to meet at Constance, where they respectively promised to attend with those sentiments of placability, without which all discussions are inevitably vain*.

The cessation of hostilities was however an event too adverse to the views and wishes of Austria, to be beheld by duke Albert with indifference. Nothing therefore was omitted, on his part, which could tend to feed the expiring flame; till convinced by repeated trials that intrigues and corruption could no longer avail, he determined to make a merit of necessity, by engaging the leaders of the aristocratic faction to send their representatives to Constance.

Every circumstance now combined in favour of peace. The natural indolence of Frederic's temper rendered him indifferent to every object, which did not operate with immediate pressure on the comforts of the moment; while his brother Albert, whom

* Bullinger, XI. Stumpf, VI.

CHAP. we have occasionally seen at the head of
 XVIII.  the Austrian armies, had been taught by repeated losses the impossibility of protecting an extensive frontier against the incursions of an enterprising foe. The fertile and once flourishing territory of Zurich exhibited a melancholy picture of devastation and decay: while the other cantons deplored the fatal effects of neglected agriculture and interrupted commerce. Such reflections, calmly suggested by the voice of reason, could not fail to produce a striking change in the opinions of all, who were exempt from the influence of prejudice or passion. Inflammatory declamations were no longer crowned with popular applause, nor were violent counsels the unerring road to favour and pre-eminence*. Such was the

* After the death of Reding, his son succeeded to his municipal honours, and with them inherited his inveterate hatred toward Zurich. It might have been expected, that the noble conduct of those gallant volunteers, whom we have formerly mentioned under the name of the *Ram*, would have excited the admiration of a generous foe; but Reding insisted that every member of that association should be excluded from the benefit of the general amnesty, and
 banished

the prevailing disposition, when the deputies assembled at Constance. The meeting was numerous, as most of the German princes attended in person, or sent ambassadors to the congress*.

Though various schemes were proposed as a basis for peace, yet so complicated were the interests of the belligerent powers, and so opposite the claims which they advanced, that fresh difficulties presented themselves at every session. No material progress it was obvious could be made, so long as Zurich continued to treat in concert with Austria. This induced the count Ra-

banished for ever from Switzerland. The obstinacy, with which this condition was urged, extorted a kind of involuntary consent on the part of Zurich; so that these valiant champions must have remained for ever strangers to their native land, had they not been secretly assisted by the Landamman of Uri, who suffered himself to be carried a prisoner to a castle in Suabia, where he was detained in honourable captivity, till the iniquitous determination was reversed. May. III. xix.

* Among the former were Albert duke of Austria, Lewis count Palatine, the two margraves of Baden, the count of Wirtemberg, and the bishops of Bale and Spire; among the latter, the electors of Mentz and Treves.

Tschudi, XIII. 467, &c.

latine

CHAP. latine to urge the adoption of a different
 XVIII. system; as he was persuaded that, when
 peace was concluded between the Helvetic
 states, few obstacles would remain to en-
 counter. His project was accepted with
 the previous stipulation, "that immediately
 on the cessation of hostilities, the prisoners
 upon both sides should be released!"

To accommodate the jarring interests of
 the Helvetic States, it was at length re-
 solved to have recourse to the ancient and
 constitutional mode; with the single dif-
 ference, that the arbitrators were directed
 to meet at Kaiserstuhl, instead of Einsied-
 len*. It was farther settled, that each
 party should retain possession of the con-
 quests, which they had made, till the final
 award was pronounced. Suffice it to add,
 that by the definitive treaty few advan-
 tages were gained on either side; though the
 pride of the Schweitzers was essentially gra-
 tified by the dissolution of the league be-
 tween Zurich and Austria.

Among the consequences resulting from
 the war, one of the most remarkable was,

* Tschudi, ib. 474, &c.

the

the extension of all the Helvetic privileges to the canton of Glaris, which had hitherto been subject to partial restrictions. The cession of Kyburg to the house of Austria was, likewise ratified. But in the space of a few years, that valuable possession reverted to Zurich, upon her liquidation of the debt due to the emperor for the expences of the war.

It is worthy of remark, that from this epoch the confederates have been distinguished by the general denomination of SWISS, from the SCHWEITZERS, who were universally considered as the original movers and chief supporters of the war.

CHAP.
XVIII.

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CHAPTER XIX.

Dissensions between Berne and Friburg—Situation and Views of the House of Austria—Invasion of the Thurgau—Pilgrim de Heudorf—Affairs of Milan—Rise and Character of the Sforza Family—Siege and Treaty of Waldshut—Distress of Sigismund—Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy—His ambitious Projects developed—Hagenbach—Intrigues of Lewis XI. King of France—His Rivalship with Charles—League between Sigismund and the Swiss.

CHAP.
XIX.


1447.

DURING the tremendous conflict in which the Helvetic people were engaged, Friburg steadily persevered in a system of neutrality, the motive of which, it is not easy to explain. As the ancient enmity, which had so long subsisted between that state and Berne, was still unextinguished

extinguished, it would have been natural for the Friburghers to have availed themselves of the general distress, and by urging their claims at that critical moment, to have extorted a full indemnity for former injuries. Contrary however to public expectation, they regarded the struggle with as much indifference, as if they had been totally unconcerned in it's issue. But no sooner was peace concluded than a circumstance, in itself of little importance, rekindled the dormant flame. A citizen of Berne was slain at Friburg in a popular affray.—Such accidents, in those days of turbulence, were by no means uncommon; yet as the deceased had been a zealous advocate for war, his death was attributed to design; and the senate in consequence, with a tone of defiance, demanded instant and signal redress. Various other causes combined to increase the vehemence of party, among which the following deserves particular notice, as it shows that in all ages of the world the most trifling causes have afforded matter for national quarrels.

CHAP.
XIX.

Louisa Rytsch, a lady of great fortune
VOL. III. L and

CHAP. and beauty, was sought in marriage by the
XIX.  eldest son of a senator of Berne, and by a noble youth of Friburg. On both sides, the contest was supported with all the ardour of juvenile passion; and a day was even appointed to decide the quarrel by single combat. At length the magistrates interfered, and after strictly prohibiting all farther acts of aggression, prevailed on the exasperated rivals to refer their dispute to the council then sitting at Bâle. This choice of umpires cannot fail to excite our surprise, as it appears a ludicrous perversion of office to occupy the pious gravity of an ecclesiastical synod with the profane contentions of love. Impelled no doubt by the spirit of charity, the reverend fathers undertook the arduous function, and met in mock solemnity to determine to which of her suitors this Helvetic Helen should belong. But in the midst of their holy labours, Louisa at once put an end to the contest by retiring into a convent, where she shortly afterward assumed the veil. Having thus heroically sacrificed domestic happiness to a high sense of duty, she vainly flattered herself

herself that with the cause of dissension, CHAP. XIX.
 dissension itself would terminate. Unfortunately, however, though her person had ceased to be in question, a violent altercation between two noble families of Berne and Friburg, respecting the possession of her estate ; and the connexions on both sides took so active a part in the contest, that a national rupture was apprehended. Alarmed for the probable consequences, the other cantons interposed, and at length effected a reconciliation by allotting to each of the contending houses a moiety of the spoil.*

A misunderstanding between the duke of Savoy and Friburg scarcely deserves the historian's notice, as it possessed none of those striking features of bravery, which usually characterised the Helvetic wars. But we cannot pass over in equal silence, the wise provisions, which were jointly established at this time by all the confederate governments, in order to repair the ravages of civil discord. It is in the internal ad-

* May, III. xxi.

CHAP. ministration of a country, in the enactment
XEX.

of salutary laws, the encouragements afforded to industry, and the measures pursued for the suppression of vice and immorality, that the talents of statesmen are more usefully displayed, than in forming plans of conquest, or adding fresh incumbrances to a country, already sinking beneath its gigantic growth. Nothing, however, was omitted by the Helvetic governments, which could either augment the happiness of the people, or increase the security of the state. Availing themselves of the weakness incidental to a vacant throne, the Urniers took possession of the Levantine vale, upon the extinction of the Visconti family, before the Milanese had determined upon whom to confer the vacant crown*.

The increasing fame of Helvetia rendered her alliance an object of interest to all the adjacent states. Hence many barons, who had formerly derided the rustic manners and habits of her peasant statesmen, now

* Fischudi.

courted

courted her friendship. Neither was her CHAP. XIX. influence any longer restricted to the narrow sphere of Alpine politics; for in the following year, Charles VII, king of France, induced by the shrewd solicitations of the dauphin, concluded a treaty with the eight cantons, for the establishment of certain commercial regulations, tending equally to the benefit of both parties. This negotiation, though confined to objects of small importance, was highly honourable to the Helvetic confederacy, who now treated as independent states with one of the most powerful princes of Europe.

The gallant behaviour of the Appenzelers during the civil war, had excited the admiration and gratitude of all their allies, and as the prudence which they displayed at that momentous crisis had effaced the memory of former errors, no valid reason existed for excluding them from the benefits of the Helvetic league. They were in consequence admitted by unanimous consent, though under the same limitations as Zug and Glaris had formerly endured, on their first accession to the confederacy.

CHAP. The spirit of liberty was daily spreading,
XIX. and it is happily in the order of nature that it should spread. The blessings obviously resulting from a free constitution ensure the downfall of despotism in every nation surrounded by people, who are no longer slaves. This important axiom may serve as a clue amidst the labyrinth of modern politics, and explain in various instances the secret motives of kings and ministers, in pursuing measures which apparently militate against the established principles of justice, wisdom, and interest.

Induced by the enchanting prospect continually before their eyes, the towns of St. Gal and Shaffhausen solicited an union with the Helvetic confederacy. The former, engaged in a fresh contest with the abbot, sought shelter from the fury of a prelate, upon whom the favourite precept of his divine master was never known to have made the smallest impression: while the latter was actually invested by an Austrian army, and unable to hold out, unless immediately assisted by their more powerful neighbours. A perpetual alliance was accordingly formed
between

between Schaffhausen and the cantons of Berne, Zurich, Lucerne, Schweitz, Glaris, and Zug ; which was no sooner made public, than the Austrians broke up their camp and raised the siege*.

The many hardships to which they had been exposed during the contest between Zurich and the other cantons, rendered the citizens of Rapperswyl more averse than ever from the Austrian yoke. Nor was it without sufficient grounds, that they complained of the severity of their lot, which exposed them, in the event of a rupture between Austria and the federative states, to bear all the brunt and burthen of the war ; while the remote situation of their sovereign's dominions almost precluded the possibility of his sending troops to their relief. This spirit of disaffection augmented daily, in proportion as an habitual intercourse with republican Helvetia, led them progressively to question and to deny the legality of a government, under which the

* Tschudi, xiv.

CHAP. duties of allegiance and protection were by
 XIX. no means reciprocal.

Apprised of the impending danger, Sigismund* in vain attempted to provide an adequate remedy. The garrison was changed, to make room for troops in whose fidelity he reposed greater confidence; the leaders of the republican party were seized and imprisoned; and a more rigorous system was introduced into every department of it's government. But severity is seldom productive of permanent benefit. It may stifle for a time the murmurs of discontent; but where the compression has been strong, the explosion will be proportionally violent.

Finding however that the experiment did not succeed, Sigismund, who was naturally of a timid disposition, determined

* Sigismund was the son of duke Frederic, who acted so memorable a part during the council of Constance. He had recently obtained the investiture of his father's states, and with them inherited a great variety of controverted claims in different parts of Switzerland. Stumpf, VI. Tschudi, XIV.

to pursue an opposite course. The voice of persuasion, it was supposed, would produce what had been ineffectually attempted by the tone of authority. Hence the troops were recalled, the tribunals reformed, and the prisoners released, without even an attempt to bring them to trial. This sudden change was attributed to fear. The rigour of his former conduct had rendered him the object of detestation, his want of resolution now exposed him to the worst of calamities that can befall a sovereign, contempt. A system of coercion ought never to be pursued, except in cases of extreme necessity, and in those cases it should be pursued with constancy. The government, which relaxes, before the danger ceases, must inevitably fall.

At this important crisis, when nothing was wanting to subvert the Austrian power but the certainty of finding friends among the Helvetic states, a body of militia, returning from the Thurgau, marched under the walls of Rapperswyl. Although their passage is represented by the Swiss historians as simply the effect of accident, yet the

CHAP.
XIX.
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CHAP. XIX. the coincidence of circumstances can hardly fail to excite a strong suspicion of design. For no sooner did the column appear in sight, than the people rose, tore down the insignia of Austrian supremacy, and declared themselves a free and independent state\*, under the protection of the Helvetic confederacy. The news of this event excited a general cry of resentment throughout all the Austrian provinces, where it was represented as a flagrant infraction of the recent peace; since by an express article, the confederates had bound themselves never to admit into their alliance the vassals or dependents of Austria. The truth of this allegation was too manifest to admit of excuse, and could be defended on the plea of necessity alone. Induced by a sense of duty, or a secret attachment to the imperial family, the senate of Zurich protested against the measure in the strongest terms. But the Austrian ministers were too much accustomed to the language of duplicity, to believe them ac-

\* Stumpf, *ib.* and Tschudi.


tuated

uated by honest motives. The Zurickers <sup>C</sup>HAP. resented their want of faith with the in- <sup>XIX.</sup> dignation of conscious integrity; while the Austrians retorted an unqualified charge of prevarication and hypocrisy. Each party grew daily more intemperate in their language, and all confidence between them was speedily destroyed; an event the most fortunate for the prosperity of Switzerland, as it finally dissolved an unnatural connexion, from the continuance of which nothing but ruin could have ensued\*.

During the contest between Austria and the Swiss, the Rheinthal by it's exposed situation had suffered severely from the frequent incursions of the Appenzellers, who no sooner discovered an unguarded spot, than they poured like a torrent from their mountains, to deluge and destroy the plain below. We have already seen to what a state of humiliation and distress duke Frederic had been reduced, by imprudently espousing the desperate cause of papal corruption†. Among the pro-

\* Simler.

† Vol. II. xiv.

CHAP. XIX.  vinctes surrendered to Sigismund, as the price of peace, the Rheinthal was included; which by a subsequent negociation was transferred to the house of Toggenburg. Convinced from experience, that no permanent tranquillity could be expected, while disunited from republican Helvetia, the representatives of the late count omitted no opportunity of conciliating the friendship of those gallant mountaineers, though purchaseable only by the cession of that romantic district, which in defiance of the threats and remonstrances of the emperor Frederic, was now annexed in perpetuity to Appenzel\*.

In order more clearly to elucidate the transactions, which are now about to occupy our attention, it becomes requisite to examine the internal politics of Austria. The extensive possessions of that powerful family were at this time divided among three branches; Frederic, who was seated on the imperial throne, consoled himself for the want of real power by a pompous

\* Tschudi, ib.

display of grandeur and supremacy. His CHAP. XIX.  
patrimonial dominions comprised scarcely  
any thing beside the barren mountains of  
Stiria, and were so totally inadequate to  
the dignity of his station, that during a  
long and tempestuous reign, it is not easy  
to determine whether the vanity, or the  
weakness of this imperial beggar most  
merits our commiseration. The duchies  
of Carniola and Carinthia belonged also  
to the elder branch, but were now held  
as appendages by duke Albert, the empe-  
ror's brother. To compensate indeed the  
deficiencies of fortune, Frederic, under  
various pretences, for a long time, kept  
possession of the Tyrol, Suabia, and Al-  
sace, which belonged to his cousin Sigis-  
mund ; but in spite of all his artifices, he  
had been recently compelled to do ample  
justice to that injured prince. The fruit-  
ful provinces of Austria, Bohemia, and  
Hungary were subject to Ladislaus, the  
eldest son of Albert II., who during the  
short period in which he filled the im-  
perial throne, had given to the world so  
flattering

CHAP. flattering a presage of his future glo-  
 XIX.  
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From this partition of territory arose a complication of interests, which occasioned continual wars. Had the councils of Helvetia been invariably directed by the dictates of wisdom, she would have endeavoured to preserve the strictest neutrality between the contending parties. And such in fact was the plan, which she actually traced for her future conduct. But notwithstanding her sage resolutions, she was imperceptibly hurried onward by the current of events, till she became a principal in the boisterous scene, and at length found herself involved in a contest of far greater magnitude than any in which she had hitherto engaged.

Notwithstanding the arrangements made with the abbess of Seckingen (which were detailed in a former volume†). Sigismund

* Ladislaus inherited Austria in right of his father, and Bohemia and Hungary in that of his mother. Schmidt, IX.

† Vol. I. viii.

still

still pretended to certain feudal rights in the canton of Glaris, as the representative of their ancient sovereign, though every prerogative, offensive to freedom, had been abrogated by a solemn treaty. Indignant at an attempt, which struck directly at their most precious privileges, the natives unanimously resented the affront; declaring their readiness, if driven to that cruel extremity, to assert their independence by the sword.* Neither was the canton of Zurich more amicably disposed toward the house of Austria. The possession of Winterthur appeared so essential to her future security, that no measure would have been deemed unjust, which would have insured the acquisition of that important fortress.

With respect to the other cantons, no positive grievance could be alleged; but war was become habitual to the Alpine peasant, and had perverted his taste for the tranquil enjoyments of a pastoral life. In such a state of mind, when the most

* Tschudi.

trifling

CHAP. trifling provocation would have sufficed to
XIX. kindle the flame of war, the intriguing policy of Rome summoned to the field the natives of Helvetia as the chosen champions of the church. Contiguity of territory, that inexhaustible source of political dissension, having occasioned a recent quarrel between the bishop of Brixen and Sigismund duke of Austria, the former had been so rigorously treated by his victorious adversary, that the sovereign pontiff thought fit to interfere in his behalf. But as anathemas and interdicts had lost much of their ancient force, it was not unusual for the court of Rome to delegate to another the execution of an office, which exceeded the compass of its own diminished powers. The choice of the person, appointed to avenge her wrongs, was in general dictated by that sagacity, which directed all the councils of the Vatican; and since in the present instance none appeared so deeply interested as the confederates in despoiling Sigismund, they were consequently selected as the ministers

sters of papal indignation to lay waste the Tyrol with fire and sword.

CHAP.
XIX.

Sigismund, whose character exhibits a motly compound of rashness and timidity, took fright at the gathering storm; and endeavoured to avert its fury by the most humiliating concessions. But the influence of Rome was no longer able to allay the tempest, which it had excited. The troops of Lucerne and Unterwalden were already masters of the most difficult passes in the mountains; and when ordered by the legate to suspend their march, they replied with firmness, "That it was an invariable principle with the Helvetic people never to return with empty hands when once they had taken the field."

It was in vain for the papal commissaries to remonstrate. The Thurgau was open to invasion, nor were the natives prepared for resistance. In many districts the Swiss were regarded in the light of friends, who came to deliver the inhabitants from the yoke of oppression. The magistrates of Frauenfeld opened their gates, and received them with every demonstration of gratitude

CHAP. and joy. Fussach, a strong fortress be-
 XIX. tween Bregenz and Rheineck, though un-
 der the protection of the Austrian garrison,
 was carried by storm. The militia of Zurich
 lay before Winterthur, while another corps
 of republicans was occupied in the siege
 of Diessenhofen. Other detachments over-
 ran the county of Sargans; took Freuden-
 berg, Wallenstadt, and Nidberg; and hav-
 ing crossed the Rhine, laid Bregenz under
 contribution.

1461. Terrified by their rapid progress, Sigis-
 mund had recourse to negociation, declar-
 ing himself ready to purchase peace at
 any price. And a treaty was accordingly
 concluded, by which the Helvetic states
 were left in possession of all their con-
 quests.*

This temperate conduct, on the part of
 the duke of Austria, is so inconsistent with
 former precedents, that it becomes neces-
 sary to investigate the motives from which
 it arose, lest we should suppose it the re-
 sult of prudence or of magnanimity. The

* Stettler, ix. Tschudi, ib.

youthful

youthful Ladislaus was lately dead; a CHAP. XIX.
victim (if we may believe some historians) to the barbarous policy of the emperor, who took away his life when he found it impossible to take away his crown.*

It would be foreign to our plan to describe the concussions which rent the eastern provinces of Europe, and shook to it's very basis the power of Austria. The exploits of Podiebrand and Huniades exhibit human fortitude in the most conspicuous light; but the revolutions of Bohemia and Hungary come not within the province of the annalist of Helvetia.

On the death of Ladislaus, the right of succession to the duchy of Austria became a source of contention between the emperor and his brother Albert. Both parties applied to the Swiss for support; but the Helvetic government, sensible of the advantages which could not fail to accrue to them from these domestic quarrels, shrewdly declined interfering in the

* This accusation is supported by most of the Swiss historians.

CHAP. contest, or taking any steps toward pro-
 XIX. moting a reconciliation.

Notwithstanding this prudent resolution, however, it was scarcely possible that peace should continue. The hatred which subsisted between the two countries was too tempestuous wholly to subside. Even the altercations of obscure individuals were magnified into subjects of national dissension, while every action capable of an unfavourable interpretation was infallibly represented in the most disadvantageous colours.

Pilgrim de Heudorf, a vassal of the house of Austria, had long infested the inhabitants of Schaffhausen by predatory incursions, though they had repeatedly supplicated for redress. A contest having lately arisen with regard to the limits of their respective jurisdictions, Pilgrim appealed to an Austrian tribunal, before which he summoned the deputies of Schaffhausen to appear. Terrified at the prospect of a quarrel with Austria, the magistrates would have infallibly submitted, had they not been secretly encouraged by

the

the confederates, who promised in the event of a rupture, to afford effectual support. CHAP.
XIX.

In other times, a dispute of this nature would probably have involved the confederates in a war; but the unconquerable indolence of Frederic's temper induced him rather to endure an insult, than to seek redress with the sword. This transaction otherwise unworthy of the historian's attention, is here noticed, as having proved a leading step toward the emancipation of Shaffhausen.

We have already stated the extinction of the Visconti family; but it is necessary once more to advert to the affairs of Milan, as of a theatre upon which the confederates are destined to act a conspicuous part. After the death of Philip Visconti, Francis Sforza, who had married one of his natural daughters, supporting his equivocal title with the address and courage of a consummate warrior, succeeded to the vacant throne. The extraordinary rise of this celebrated man, the bastard son of a Neapolitan peasant, into a conspicuous place

M 3 among

CHAP. among the greatest princes of his age, de-
 XIX. mands our particular regard.

* Jacomuzzo Sforza, or *Attendulo*, as he was then called (for he did not assume the name of *Sforza*, till he had raised himself to pre-eminence in arms) was one day following his plough, when a company of soldiers accidentally traversed the field. The splendid accoutrements of war attracted his attention. A secret instinct more rapid than reflection, whispered to his beating heart, that he was designed by Heaven for higher occupations than those of the sickle and the spade. Yet before he finally embraced the resolution of abandoning his home, he had recourse to the decision of chance. For this purpose, he threw the plough-share into a tree (the thickest, probably, that he could find) resolving to follow the dictates of his inclination, if it remained suspended, but to adhere to his original vocation, if it fell to the ground. It did not fall. Jacomuzzo therefore, renouncing his rustic garb, enrolled himself

* Gaillard, *Histoire de François*. I. 103.

a soldier.

a soldier, Nor had he cause to repent his determination ; for talents like his were not formed for humble life. With a celerity beyond example, he passed through all the gradations of military rank, till he became the most illustrious of the Italian *Condottieri*, and had at one time an army of seven thousand men devoted to him by the united influences of confidence and affection. His venal services, analagously to the genius of the age, were constantly directed by the suggestions of interest ; and the party, which was able to bid the highest, might surely reckon on his support.

Having thus attained the summit of his wishes, Sforza became ambitious of transmitting his name and power to a worthy successor. But as none of his legitimate children were endowed with the necessary qualities, he devoted himself to the education of Francis, a natural son, who gave early proofs of superior genius, and promised to tread in his father's steps with increasing reputation.

After having defended the Milanese during the reign of Philip Visconti, Francis

M 4

took

CHAP.
XIX.

CHAP. took possession of it upon his death. And
 XIX. so great was his renown, both as a politician and a warrior, that on mounting the ducal throne, he received offers both from the emperor and the pope to confirm his usurpation, if he would consent to hold the duchy as a fief. Confiding however in the boundless resources of his own mind, he disdained to wear a dependent crown. In his estimation no title could be better than that, by which he had secured the reversion of his father's power, the title of the sword.

His talents were not confined to military operations : In the cabinet, he was equally distinguished. Louis XI. king of France, whose knowledge of mankind was never doubted, rated his abilities so high, that he is said to have consulted him upon the most important transactions of his reign ; and in particular to have been guided by his advice, in planning the overthrow of that dangerous conspiracy, which decorated rebellion with the specious name of a LEAGUE FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD.

A power

A power, erected on merit, is precarious CHAP.
XIX.
as the life of its possessor. After the death of Francis, the discontented and the factious began to indulge in the wild chimeras of enterprise and ambition. Finding herself too weak to contend singly against the impending storm, his widow Bianca applied to the Swiss, offering them the most advantageous conditions, provided they would engage in her defence.

Delighted with the prospect of figuring on a more exalted theatre, the Swiss embraced the proposal with all the eagerness of men, whose leading passion was the love of glory; and a convention was in consequence signed, establishing a friendly intercourse between the two countries, and enacting certain provisions for their mutual security, in the event of a rupture with any foreign power. This treaty, celebrated in Helvetic history under the title of the CAPITULATE OF MILAN, was no sooner concluded, than an obstacle arose which threatened to intercept its salutary effects. For so completely occupied had the contracting parties been in providing
against

against external aggression, that they overlooked an object of the highest importance to their own immediate tranquillity.

The Urniers were masters of the Levantine vale, and positively refused to surrender it; declaring, in unequivocal terms, that they considered possession as the only just criterion of property. The court of Milan, on the other hand, insisted on the restitution; so that in all probability the union would scarcely have survived its formation, had not an expedient been devised, which afforded a salvo for ducal pride without compromising Swiss interest. The claim of feudal supremacy over that romantic district had hitherto resided in the chapter of Milan*; but being now transferred to the duke, the investiture was granted in form to the Urniers, upon their consenting to hold the contested province as a fief. History abounds with instances of a similar kind, which tend to display at once the craft and the weakness of humanity.

* Tschudi, ib.

No sooner had Sigismund consented CHAP.
XIX. to the cession of the Thurgau, than he was convinced of the impossibility of retaining Winterthur, which was now entirely surrounded by the Helvetic republic. He therefore willingly entered into a negotiation for the sale of it.

* Trifling indeed was the sum required for balancing the account with the duke of Austria; yet it reduced the senate of Zurich to the disagreeable necessity of imposing additional taxes. And in those enviable days of fiscal inexperience, the exaction of an extraordinary impost was universally regarded as a public calamity. In many places the peasants refused obedience to the decree, and drove away the collectors of the new revenue by force. This outrageous conduct was particularly observable in those districts which lay contiguous to the confines of Schweitz. The animosity, which had so long subsisted

* The purchase was concluded for 10,000 florins, 8,000 of which were due from the house of Austria on account of an ancient debt. Bullinger.

between

CHAP. between the rival cantons of Schweitz and
 XIX. Zurich, inspired the insurgents with a well-
 founded hope of their being supported by
 the former. The event too amply justified
 their expectations; and things proceeded
 to such extremities, that the diet was ob-
 liged to interpose, and to declare in the
 name of the Helvetic people it's firm re-
 solution of supporting Zurich in the legal
 exercise of her constitutional rights.*

Meanwhile another incident had occur-
 red, which occasioned a fresh rupture with
 Austria. Henry de Regensheim, a Suabian
 baron, was involved in a dispute with the
 town of Muhlhausen, at that time in al-
 liance with the Swiss. The object was
 unimportant: but Regensheim was of that
 description of persons who are born for
 the annoyance of their fellow-creatures.
 Violent in every undertaking, he was
 scarcely less formidable in his friendship,
 than in his resentment. The only tie,
 which bound him, was that of interest.

* Tschudi,

Resolving

Resolving to push matters to extremities, this man cited the magistrates of Muhlhausen to appear before an Austrian tribunal; and finding that his summons was treated with contempt, proceeded to invest the town at the head of his vassals, under pretence of vindicating his master's authority. Upon receiving intelligence of these hostile movements, the Helvetians flew to the defence of their allies, and crossing the Rhine in considerable force, laid waste the Austrian provinces. Both in the Sundgau, and the Black forest, many towns and castles were reduced to ashes; till wearied with desultory destruction, they determined to undertake a more important enterprise, and collecting their scattered column, laid siege to Waldshut.*

In earlier times the transactions of Helvetia had been beheld with indifference by most of the princes of Europe, who thought it below their dignity to inquire what uncouth village the Alpine peasants

* Bullinger.

had

CHAP. had reduced beneath their barbarous sway.

XIX.

But the eminence which they had now attained in the art of war, conferred lustre on their name. Even the supreme pontiff himself, absorbed as he was in projects of aggrandisement, no longer regarded them as unworthy of his paternal care; but viewed with admiration the achievements of a nation, which his predecessors had scarcely deigned to honour with the name of Christians, because their poverty could contribute little to pamper the luxury of the Roman court.

The fall of Constantinople, and the rapid progress of the Mahometan arms, spread consternation throughout the Christian world. Nor was Æneas Sylvius* (who then filled the papal chair, under the title of

* Some of the French historians make mention of a letter written by Æneas Sylvius to Mahomet II. emperor of the Turks, the singularity of which seems to merit attention. "If you wish, (said the holy father) to extend your dominions over all the western world, the task will not be difficult. Nothing is wanting but a little water. The moment you have undergone the ceremony of baptism, we ourselves shall no longer scruple to acknowledge

of Pius II.) insensible to the impending danger; but displaying a consecrated banner, he called on the nations of Christendom to lay aside their private animosities, and concur in an enterprise far more important to the followers of the gospel than the conquest of Jerusalem, or the recovery of the Holy Cross. At his intercession, the Swiss were induced to suspend their operations, though Waldshut was on the point of capitulating; and through his mediation a peace was concluded, by which the duke of Austria engaged to pay a large sum to the confederates in compensation of all existing claims, and to make over to them, several towns in Suabia, as security for the money.*

"ledge your supremacy, or to hail you by the glorious
"title of EMPEROR. Nay, more; we will then implore
"your assistance against those who have usurped our
"dominions, and after the example of our predecessors,
"who conferred the imperial dignity on the son of Pepin,
"*you will not find us ungrateful for your favours.*"
Millot, Histoire Universelle.

* Tschudi, ib.

It

CHAP.

XIX.

It was not however from a benevolent wish to spare the effusion of human blood, nor from a generous spirit of moderation, that Austria thus consented to sheathe the sword. The derangement of her finances was the true motive of her forbearance; a circumstance, to which we have frequently alluded, but which now operated with increasing pressure. So great indeed was Sigismund's distress, that it became impossible for him to fulfil the obligation, which he had recently contracted with the Swiss, without the assistance of some friendly power. The misunderstanding subsisting between him and the emperor would have deprived him of every expectation from that quarter, could he even have hoped, under any circumstances, to obtain a loan from a prince, whose poverty was still greater than his own.

In this cruel dilemma, he had recourse to the king of France; but Louis, who had succeeded his father in 1641, had other views. Personal experience had taught that sagacious prince to estimate Helvetic courage at its real value. It was by the hands

hands of that gallant people, that he al-
 ready meditated the destruction of the
 duke of Burgundy, the only sovereign in
 Europe whose power interfered with his
 own. Desirous however of conciliat-
 ing friends, and indifferent about the
 means which he employed, he received the
 duke of Austria with the warmest demon-
 strations of regard; and anxious to get
 rid of his visitor, and determined not to
 comply with his request, dismissed him
 with a paltry pension of ten thousand
 crowns.

It was not by the parade of courtesy,
 or by professions of esteem, that the dis-
 tresses of Sigismund could be alleviated.
 Disappointed in the main object of his
 journey, he resolved to apply to the duke
 of Burgundy, from whose vanity he hoped
 to extort, what he could not expect to receive
 from his benevolence. Charles, from his
 temerity, surnamed *the Bold*, was at this
 time one of the most powerful princes in
 Europe. His dominions extended, with
 little interruption, from the confines of
 Switzerland to the German Ocean, and

VAL. III. N. compre-

CHAP. XIX. comprehended a considerable part of Holland, with the provinces of Flanders, Artois, Burgundy, and Franche Comté. Nor were the revenues disproportionate to the dimensions of his states. His Flemish possessions were enriched by flourishing manufactures, and formed an emporium of foreign commerce. Yet such power, supported by such resources, served only to stimulate and to feed his insatiable and exhausting ambition. In the wild pursuit of universal empire, he nourished the romantic hope of reducing Lorraine and Switzerland beneath his sway, and thence intended to push forward his victorious arms to the shores of the Mediterranean; consolidating all the intermediate provinces into one compact state, over which he purposed to reign despotically, with the exalted title of KING.

Nothing therefore could be more agreeable to his inclinations, than an offer which afforded him a specious pretext for intermeddling with the internal politics of Helvetia. He welcomed Sigismund with open arms, and immediately advanced him the demanded

demanding sum, on the security of certain towns* in Suabia and Alsace.

CHAP.
XIX.

Relieved from his most pressing necessities, without surrendering the mortgaged towns into the hated hands of republicans, Sigismund farther flattered himself, that the overbearing temper of Charles would not suffer him to remain on terms of amity with his new neighbours in Helvetia; and any occurrence, which served to embarrass the cantons, was still sought and seized with avidity by every member of the Austrian family.†

Though by no means remarkable for sagacity, Sigismund was correct in his conjectures. The Burgundian commander was no sooner in possession of the forest-towns, than he treated the Swiss with a degree of insolence, which none but slaves could endure. Peter de Hagenbach was amply endowed with every quality calculated to conciliate the favour of a tyrant,

* These were the forest-towns, together with several fiefs in Alsace. The amount of the loan was eighty thousand florins.

† May, III. xxiii.

CHAP. and to excite the destation of his subjects.

XIX.

Proud and interested, suspicious and inflexible, he in a short time rendered the Burgundian name so justly odious, that the natives were induced to look back with regret to the rigid government of Austria herself.

All the adjacent states were now exposed to danger, either by overt acts of aggression, or from the machinations of clandestine intrigue. Yet against the independent Swiss his rancour was levelled with peculiar asperity. Scarce a day was suffered to pass, without some injury to their commerce, or some encroachment upon their jurisdiction. Unable any longer to submit in silence, they applied to the duke of Burgundy for redress. But the indifference, with which their complaints were heard, too satisfactorily proved, that the behaviour of the governor was agreeable to the principal, whom he so adequately represented.

As remonstrances were of no avail, the senate of Berné addressed themselves to France for support. To the feeling of compassion

compassion Lewis was a stranger; but no one was more alive to the suggestions of interest, or more ready in obeying its impulse. He instantly perceived all the advantage, and all the glory, which he might reap from declaring himself the protector of Switzerland. Yet wishing to avoid a rupture with Charles, till his own kingdom was restored to a state of tranquillity, he conjured the Helvetic people to dissemble awhile their resentment, accompanying this exhortation with the most solemn promises of succour, in case they should be attacked by the duke.

In the following year this alliance was still further cemented by a treaty signed at Tours, which is thus given by Philip de Comines: * “ We, Lewis, &c. promise never, either personally or otherwise, to give countenance or support the duke of Burgundy against our dearly beloved friends, the cantons of the GRAND LEAGUE, so that they may be injured either in their persons or their property. We also of the said

* Mem. VL. iv.

CHAP. *League* do covenant, neither directly nor indirectly, to afford any succour, &c. to the aforesaid duke of Burgundy against his most Christian Majesty, so that he may receive molestation or detriment either in his person or his property. And it is our farther meaning, that the alliance formerly contracted between us and the king of France be preserved inviolate in all it's parts, and do remain in perpetual force and vigour."


From the words of this treaty, no less than from the general tenor of his conduct, it appears that the leading object of Lewis was to embroil the confederates in hostilities with Charles. The active part which this prince had taken in favour of the revolted nobles of France*, had made too deep an impression upon his implacable soul to be ever obliterated. Negotiations indeed, as was in reality the case, might produce an apparent calm; but it was evident that, whenever an opportunity of humbling the pride and the power of Burgundy, should occur, he would seize it

* The dukes of Berri and Bretagne. (Comines.)

with

with avidity. His conduct therefore was in every respect conformable to the atrocious system which he pursued, base and cunning, and hypocritical. Though not deficient in personal courage, he invariably preferred the wily path of corruption to the open redress of the sword. On the contrary, the sanguine and impetuous temper of his rival, combined with an unbounded confidence in his own resources, hurried him on with resistless impulse, till it finally conducted him to an untimely grave.

Meanwhile, Hagenbach, who sedulously copied all his master's defects, obstinately persisted in his career. Though repeatedly solicited by the magistrates of Shaffhausen, he positively refused to liquidate the debt, which was due from the house of Austria, by an article of the treaty of Waldshut, and which the duke of Burgundy had expressly undertaken to discharge. Fearful however that the known prudence of the Swiss might tempt them to submit to any injuries, rather than recur to the extremity of arms, he resolved

CHAP. no longer to leave them a choice. With
 XIX.  this view, he caused the Burgundian arms to be erected in the bailiwick of Shenkenberg, at that time subject to the jurisdiction of Berne. Nor when the senate protested against the illegality of the act, did he deign to return any answer.*

1471. While things remained in this precarious state, and the most trifling incident might have sufficed to kindle the flame of war, Amadeus duke of Savoy died, leaving two infant sons under the tutelage of their mother Jolanda, who was sister to the king of France.† Amadeus had also two brothers, the counts of Bresse and of Romont; the former zealously attached to the interest of Lewis, the latter devoted with equal ardor to the service of Charles. Between persons so differently affected, no permanent friendship could subsist. From prudential motives, their animosities had been stifled during the life of their elder brother; but no sooner were they delivered from his control, than their hatred burst forth in

* Tschudi.

† Stettler, V.

many.

many overt-acts of aggression. Under pre-CHAP.
tence of asserting his right to an equal XIX.
share in the government, Romont seized
upon several towns in the Pais de Vaud ;
a circumstance scarcely less alarming to
the Swiss, than to the count of Bresse him-
self. By the timely interposition however
of common friends, the brothers were ap-
parently reconciled, and civil commotions
prevented.

We have frequently beheld the Helvetic
people snatched from imminent peril by
an excess of good fortune, which may al-
most be deemed miraculous. But they
had in general to contend only against a
passing storm, upon the dispersion of
which serenity revisited their vallies. They
were now summoned to act under very
different circumstances, and had to depend
more on the prudence of their councils,
than on the energy of their courage. In
such a situation, unanimity alone could
ensure success ; but unfortunately opinions
were much divided, respecting the line of
conduct, which it was expedient to pur-
sue.

Aware

CHAP. XIX. Aware of the danger inevitably consequent upon an intimate connection with either of the rival courts, their ablest statesmen recommended a cautious and temporising system, which would leave them at liberty to shape their course, as the dictates of prudence might suggest. On the other hand, seduced by ardent hopes and brilliant remembrances, the ambitious anxiously look forward to accumulated wealth and glory. To such, the service of France afforded an alluring prospect. Yet there were not wanting, even among the senators of Berne, friends to the Burgundian interest. At the head of this party was Adrian de Bubenberg, a man descended from one of the most ancient families of Helvetia, long distinguished as a political leader, and possessing the highest reputation for prudence, wisdom, and integrity.

Lewis, who surpassed all his contemporaries in the profound science of intrigue, was sensible of the advantage which his adversary would derive from the support of so powerful an advocate. In order therefore to balance the ascendancy of Bubenberg,

benberg, he found means to gain over Ni-
colas de Diesbach, to whose activity and eloquence he was eventually indebted for many essential services. Among the higher order of citizens, none was more abundantly gifted than Diesbach with those versatile and commanding qualities, which are calculated to sway the public opinion, and to direct the intricate machine of party. Persuasive, enterprising, and sagacious, he had attained the summit of popular favour, by manners invariably gracious, and repeated acts of generosity. Admiration and applause were the constant objects of his pursuit; and to the attainment of these he frequently sacrificed, what the inflexible virtue of his political antagonist would have deemed important duties: while Bubenberg, trusting solely to the purity of his intentions, contented himself with deserving the good opinion of his fellow-citizens, without stooping to court it.

Ever attentive to the most minute occurrence, connected with the welfare of the state, the senate took advantage of these different

CHAP.

XIX.

CHAP. different characters and attachments in
XIX. the present embarrassing crisis of their affairs. Diesbach was accordingly sent to Paris with extensive powers, while Buben-berg was entrusted with a commission no less delicate at the Burgundian court.

Whatever might be the sentiments of individuals, it was evidently the policy of the Helvetic government, to preserve the strictest neutrality in all their transactions with these rival princes. Accordingly, the senate of Berne issued a decree, commanding all their subjects, who were enrolled in foreign service, to return within a limited period. But their martial ardor was no longer to be restrained by prohibitory edicts. Even so early as the year 1465, a body of five thousand Swiss marched under the standard of Burgundy against the king of France*.

Every circumstance now combined to accelerate a rupture between Charles and the confederates. Hagenbach, no longer concealing his master's intention of con-

* Stettler.

quering Switzerland, boasted publicly that he was himself to receive the counties of Burgdorf, Thun, and Nidau, as his portion of the spoil. This assertion was confirmed by reports, which arrived from every quarter, of the mighty preparations carrying on throughout all the Burgundian states.

It appears, from the most authentic sources, that a negociation was actually set on foot between Charles and the emperor for elevating the former to the regal dignity, and augmenting his dominions with various additions at the expense of Switzerland and Italy, on condition that he should give his only daughter in marriage to Maximilian, Frederic's eldest son. But the defects of the duke's temper were continually at variance with his interest. He felt a malicious pleasure in mortifying the chief of the Germanic constitution by an ostentatious display of magnificence, to which Frederic was unable to attain; and in consequence delayed the accomplishment of the treaty, on the most frivolous pretences, for the gratification of his inordinate

CHAP.
XIX.

CHAP. ^{XIX.} inate pride.* The emperor at last broke off the negociation in disgust, leaving Charles at leisure to repent his fatal folly. No character, perhaps, was ever so little calculated to conciliate friends. The object of his worship was power. The delight of his life was war. By his constitution, enabled to endure the severest fatigues, and possessing an extent of terri-

* An interview, which took place at Treves between the emperor and Charles, is thus described by May. Frederic made his public entry at the head of two thousand five hundred horse. But the greater part belonged to the princes, by whom he was accompanied, as his own retinue was far from numerous, and evinced by their accoutrements the contracted state of his finances. The following day, the duke of Burgundy arrived, in a stile of magnificence unknown to modern Europe. He was followed by five thousand men at arms, and surrounded by his Flemish guards, all of whom wore the most costly armour, and were mounted on horses of incomparable excellence. Charles himself was habited in a royal robe, decorated with precious stones, which were also scattered with great profusion over the trappings of his courser. On his right hand, rode his duchess Margaret, sister to Edward IV. of England, in the full bloom of youth and beauty; and on his left was the princess Mary, who rivalled her mother-in-law in all her charms. May, III. 26.

tory

tory exceeded by few European princes, he had imbibed the most exaggerated ideas of his own strength, and thought no enterprise too chimerical for perseverance to accomplish. Yet in spite of his numerous and striking defects, there was an intrepidity in his nature, which cast an imposing lustré over all his actions, and induced the vulgar to admire his conduct. Delighted with external pomp to an excess, which indicated almost childish weakness, he was frequently generous from ostentation, scarcely ever from benevolence. But once offended, he was implacable; and when an opportunity occurred to punish the transgressor, he gave unlicensed scope to the natural ferocity of his disposition. Whoever opposed his inclinations, even in the minutest trifle, was from that moment regarded as an enemy; and upon this principle, we may explain his inveteracy against the Swiss. He hated every people, in proportion as they were free*.

Desirous of impressing the adjacent states 1474.

* *Memoirs de Comines, passim.*


with

CHAP. with an exaggerated idea of his power,
XIX.

Charles determined to visit his newly-acquired dominions in Alsace and Suabia. Early in the ensuing spring he set out, accompanied by all the pageantry of an Asiatic despot. On his arrival at Brissac, he was met by deputies from the Helvetic cantons, who came to remonstrate against the proceedings of his ministers in a mixed tone of manliness and moderation. After expatiating on the friendship, which from the first foundation of their republic had subsisted between his illustrious ancestors and the Helvetic people, they ventured to complain of the recent aggressions of a man, who not only enjoyed his favour, but professed to act by his express command. They concluded by soliciting indemnity for the past, and security for the future; expressing at the same time an earnest wish, that no misunderstanding might disturb the harmony, which had so long prevailed to the mutual benefit of both countries, and which they were determined never by any misconduct of their own to violate. To this modest petition Charles deigned not to return

return any answer; nor would he suffer the deputies to prefer their suit, except in the submissive posture of supplicants, upon their knees. When they had ended, he broke up the audience with evident marks of displeasure.

Encouraged by the approbation of his sovereign, Hagenbach no longer set bounds to his tyranny, but having received reinforcements from Flanders, resolved to avail himself of the favourable moment to humble the pride of democracy. Happily for mankind, despotism frequently accelerates it's own downfall, by the very means which it employs for it's security. Irritated by unredressed provocations, the mortgaged provinces turned their eyes toward Switzerland, as the only country from whose humanity and courage they could hope for support. Yet before they ventured to take this decisive step, they secretly addressed themselves to their hereditary sovereign, imploring his protection and advice. The nobles accused the Burgundian prefect of violating every privilege, which had belonged to their order from the remotest antiquity;

CHAP. tiquity; while the people taxed him with
XIX.  venality in the administration of justice, and complained of his having fettered their commerce by restrictions, which must eventually terminate in its ruin.

Convinced of his inability to rescue them from their oppressions, Sigismund approved the plan of a more intimate union with the Swiss. And though he had many prejudices to conquer, before he could treat with them as an independent people, necessity at length subdued pride, and an alliance was concluded on terms of equality.

From our previous knowledge of Sigismund's character, we should hardly have expected from him a measure so prudent. But the success of this delicate negotiation must be ascribed entirely to the subtle genius of Lewis XI.; who foreseeing the benefit which might accrue to himself from such a confederacy, exerted every artifice to promote it. By his express desire, a congress was assembled at Constance, where Sigismund attended in person. Under the preponderating influence of France, every obstacle was surmounted; and the event proved

proved so satisfactory to the duke of Aus-
 tria, that in token of his implicit confidence
 in his new allies, he visited the shrine of
 Einsiedlen, where he was received by the
 Helvetic government with the most flatter-
 ing marks of respect.

By the conditions of the treaty it was stipulated, "that if any misunderstanding should hereafter arise between the contracting parties, the question in dispute should be immediately submitted to award." The Swiss engaged, in the event of a war, to "serve as auxiliaries in the Austrian army; to restore to Sigismund the archives, which had been carried off at the capture of Baden; and finally, to admit no Austrian subject, without the consent of his sovereign, into the Helvetic league." The duke on his part, promised to "fulfil the convention of Waldshut without farther delay; to guarantee to the cantons all their recent conquests; and lastly, to permit the Swiss to garrison the forest-towns, *whenever the situation of their affairs should require it.**"

* These were Lauffenburg, Seckingen, Waldshut, and Rheinfeld, places which commanded the passage of the Rhine.

CHAP. XIX. This last important concession, evidently levelled against the duke of Burgundy, was granted by Sigismund, though with extreme reluctance, at the earnest solicitation of Lewis; who having thus accomplished what he justly regarded as a master-stroke of policy, determined to spare neither money nor intrigues, till he had plunged the confederates into a war.

Charles was no sooner apprised of this formidable coalition, than he began seriously to consider the danger to which it exposed him, and resolved to leave nothing untried, which seemed likely to regain the confidence of the Swiss, or to excite jealousy between them and their new ally. For this purpose, he sent ambassadors to Berne and Friburg, to demand an explanation of their future intentions, and to give the strongest assurances of his pacific views. At the same time, he directed the count de Romont, to whom he appears to have entrusted his most secret plans, to watch the French negociators, and if possible, to counteract their designs. But as he was yet unprepared to take the field, he
farther

farther instructed him by promises and explanations to efface all unfavourable impressions, as far as could be accomplished without affecting the dignity of his character. Romont, who entered cordially into all his projects, dispersed confidential agents throughout the different cantons, in order to sound the public opinion. Among the lower classes, many of whom had served under the Burgundian standard, the munificence and temerity of the duke had gained him numerous partisans. Even in the senate of Berne, his gold wrought a sudden metamorphosis. "Since the duke," said a leading member, "disavows the conduct of Hagenbach, we can have no farther cause for complaint."

To persons of experience in political affairs, however, whose judgment was unbiassed by sinister motives, this unexpected alteration of behaviour could not fail to appear in a suspicious light. They felt that the softened language, now employed by the ministers of Charles, arose not from a change of sentiments, but from a change of situation. Sigismund was now become

CHAP. his enemy, and anxiously sought an op-
 XIX.
 portunity of extricating himself from those engagements, in which by his own improvidence he had been involved. Having at length obtained from the speculating liberality of Lewis the requisite sum, he declared his intention of redeeming the mortgaged towns, and actually deposited the money in the hands of a banker at Bâle. But Charles, who had calculated upon a more permanent tenure, with his accustomed haughtiness replied, "that it was the duty of a debtor to seek his creditor; so that, if Sigismund found himself in a situation to discharge the bond, it was at Besançon, and not Bâle, that the payment ought to be made."—Fearful however that this answer might not produce the desired effect, he added in a stile still more offensive, "that until this condition was punctually executed, it was his firm resolution to keep possession of the mortgaged territory; and, if Sigismund was displeased at his determination, he might seek redress by the sword."

Meanwhile Hagenbach grew daily less guarded

guarded in his actions, and more insolent toward those who dared to remonstrate.—

CHAP.
XIX.

Notwithstanding the repeated promises of Romont, and the affected moderation of Charles, every circumstance combined to indicate an approaching rupture. The Flemish troops were incessantly occupied in repairing the fortifications of Brissac, magazines were formed; and soldiers enrolled. Dismayed by what they saw, the citizens enquired the motive of these preparations, and were convinced by the governor's answer, that the annihilation of their liberties were in contemplation. As a present punishment likewise for their importunity, persons of the most distinguished rank and merit, were dragged from the bosom of their families, and immured in dungeons without even the mockery of a trial.

Clandestine meetings began now to be held among these oppressed people, to concert the fittest means of shaking off the Burgundian yoke; when it was determined to begin by the instant destruction of Hagenbach. Astonished and terrified at the unexpected attack, he fled to his mercenaries.

CHAP.
XIX.

ries for protection. But the charm by which he had been hitherto supported, was dissolved. A great part of the garrison had been secretly gained by the insurgents. Convinced that no hope remained of effectual resistance, he now attempted to escape by flight, but was prevented by the vigilance of his enemies, who got possession of his person, loaded him with chains, and threw him into a dungeon. Upon receiving intelligence of this revolution, Sigismund hastened to the assistance of his subjects, and was hailed by them with every demonstration of joy.

From the natural violence of Charles' temper, however, it could hardly be doubted that he would revenge the affront, which had been offered to his authority, by some signal act of retribution. As the Austrian frontier therefore was exposed to invasion on the side of Burgundy, the Helvetic diet, who had cordially participated in the liberation of the forest-towns, immediately sent a body of Swiss to Sigismund's assistance.

Confident in the support of the Helvetic cantons, and encouraged by the promises of
of

of Lewis, Sigismund resolved to proceed CHAP. XIX.
against the captive prefect, with all the severity due to his crimes. But aware of the effect, which a measure so decisive could not fail to produce on the mind of the inflammable Charles, he prudently resolved by his mode of conducting the trial to involve the Swiss in his responsibility, and thus in the event of a war, to secure to himself their future co-operation.

With this view he invited the neighbouring states to send their profoundest civilians to attend the important investigation, under the pretext of conferring upon it additional solemnity. On the appointed day a croud of spectators assembled at Brissac, attracted thither by the united impulse of curiosity and hatred. Hagenbach was now brought before a tribunal, composed of men most conspicuous in all the adjacent provinces for merit, gravity, and understanding. The crimes, alleged against him, were of the blackest die, and comprehended almost every species of human turpitude. In extenuation of his guilt, he produced the orders of his sovereign; "to which,

CHAP. which, as a faithful subject," he said, "it
XIX. was his duty implicitly to conform." He
admitted that the provocations, which he
had met with from the turbulence of a se-
ditionous people, had occasionally tempted
him to exceed the limits of dispassionate
justice. But under such circumstances vi-
gour, he boldly affirmed, was indispen-
sable, and might be justified by the ex-
ample of the most illustrious characters.

When accused of having committed vio-
lence upon ladies of the highest rank, he
sarcastically replied, "that he had never
"found it requisite to recur to force; as he
"had never, in his extensive experience,
"found any woman proof to the powers of
"persuasion, or the temptation of gold."

From the general complexion of his de-
fence, the sentence may be easily antici-
pated. The judges were unanimous in
their opinion of his guilt, and on the very
evening of the day, upon which he was
tried, the monster was beheaded, by the
light of torches, amid the execrations of
thousands*.

* Stettler, v.

No sooner was the duke of Burgundy CHAP.
XIX. made acquainted with his untimely fate, than he gave unbounded scope to his fury, and swore to expiate the unprecedented outrage by a memorable revenge. But as he was at that time occupied in the siege of Nuys, a strong fortress in the bishopric of Cologne, which had withstood all his efforts for many months, he felt the necessity of terminating one enterprise, before he rashly engaged in another. He sent an ambassador therefore to the Helvetic cantons, with fresh assurances of friendship, warning them at the same time of the impolicy of their present conduct, in forsaking an ancient ally to confederate with their hereditary foe; and promising them in conclusion, the most ample satisfaction for all their past grievances, which he artfully attributed to the mistaken zeal of his representative. He farther assured them, in the most solemn terms, that their complaints against Hagenbach would have been instantly redressed, had they been preferred with proper respect.

Though

CHAP. XIX. Though he thus addressed them in the tone of benevolence, by the mouth of a delegate, it was not in his power to conceal his feelings from those, who had access to his person. By means of the numerous spies, whom he entertained in the Burgundian camp, Lewis received regular intelligence of every thing that passed, and communicated his discoveries to the Helvetic government, lest they should be deceived by his rival's duplicity. With a view likewise of connecting himself with them still more closely, and of establishing a permanent ascendancy in their councils, he concluded a fresh convention with them, by which he extended their privileges, and procured for himself in return the most important concessions*.

Among the inferior orders of men, an alliance productive of pecuniary emolument was received with unbounded ap-

* This treaty, which secured to the Swiss an annual pension from France, and to the French monarch the privilege of levying troops in Switzerland, is given *verbatim* by Comines, VI. iv.

plause.

plause. But of ~~these~~ whose views were enlightened by experience and reflection, many rejected the bribe with disdain. In the senate of Berne the debates were conducted with extreme violence. Bubenberg reprobated the compact, as not less disgraceful than ruinous to the independence of Switzerland, in a stile of Roman eloquence and virtue. But his efforts were ineffectual. The intrigues and the money of France were irresistible. The indignant orator* was condemned to exile, while Diesbach was furnished with ample powers to complete the sale of his country.

Having thus basely stooped to barter freedom for foreign gold, the Berners vainly hoped to diminish their own ignominy by involving the rest of the cantons in equal disgrace. With this intent, they endeavoured to persuade the other members of the Helvetic league to enter into a similar convention; a project, in which they were

* This fact is positively contradicted by May, who pretends that Bubenberg, disgusted at the popularity of Diesbach, retired voluntarily from public affairs.

too

CHAP. too powerfully seconded by the constitu-
XIX. tional failing of their allies.

Whether Lewis had been less liberal in his donations to Friburg, or whether corruption in this instance failed of its usual success, is a question too intricate to decide. It is certain, however, that the magistrates of that city refused the venal offer. "We value the blessing of independence," said they, "too highly, to exchange it for any temptations which wealth or power can hold out. And we prize too dearly the blood of our fellow-citizens, to sell it for any price."

The treaty between Lewis and the Swiss is worthy of notice for two reasons: First, because it in a great measure produced the Burgundian war; and secondly, because it gave birth to that odious system of corruption, by which France was enabled for more than two centuries to govern the councils of Helvetia, as her interest or her ambition suggested. The subtilty of the Gallic monarch discovered her leading passion, and his sagacity directed it, as best suited

suiting his purpose. Adhering to the same CHAP. artful policy, his successors gradually ^{XIX.} improved upon the plan sketched by the hand of that consummate master, and thus occasioned to France an immense expenditure of treasure, and to Switzerland a continual effusion of blood.

CHAP-

CHAPTER XX.

Craft of Lewis—War between the Helvetic People and the Duke of Burgundy—Charles makes himself Master of Lorraine, and invades Switzerland—Capture of Granson—Inhumanity and Treachery of the Conqueror—Burgundians defeated at Vaumarcus—Battle of Morat—Behaviour of Charles—The Duke of Lorraine joins the Swiss—Battle of Nancy—Death and Character of the Duke of Burgundy.

CHAP. XX. FROM the multiplicity of her political engagements, the situation of Helvetia was materially changed. Although it may be reasonably doubted, whether her internal prosperity had acquired additional stability, her reputation had risen to such a pitch, that her friendship was courted by those very powers, who had so lately despised her poverty and anticipated her fall.

Among

Among her numerous allies, she counted CHAP. XX.
 Frederic count Palatine, the margrave of
 Baden, the duke of Lorraine, the count of
 Wirtemberg, and many of the principal ci-
 ties both in Suabia and Alsace*.

Lewis, who held the magic wand which put this confederacy in motion, had no sooner succeeded in uniting the German states, than he resolved to plunge them into a war with the duke of Burgundy. In the prosecution of this iniquitous plan he had many obstacles to encounter, but by bribes and promises he surmounted them all.

Were it possible for treachery to admit of any palliation, this prince would certainly have more to allege in his own justification in the present instance, than in most of the other actions of his life; since every motive of policy, every principal of self-preservation, and every incentive of ambition combined to trace the crooked path

* This union was denominated the *Lower League*, in order to distinguish it from the *Helvetic Confederacy*, which was known by the appellation of the *Upper League*.

CHAP. which he now determined to pursue*.—

XX. By the intrigues principally of Charles, Edward IV. of England had been roused from the lap of pleasure, and induced to enter Picardy at the head of a numerous and well-appointed army; while he himself threatened France in another quarter.

Lewis was at all times more alive to the suggestions of interest, than to the call of glory. He therefore thought it no disgrace to deliver himself by any concessions from an enemy, whose impetuous valour had so often shaken the throne of his progenitors. With this view, he distributed pensions and presents among the ministers and favourites of the English monarch. Nor was that monarch himself insensible to the temptation of gold. Though brave even to temerity, and ever foremost in the career of danger, voluptuous indolence was far more congenial with his inclinations, than the toils, or the perils of war. But other motives concurred to influence his conduct upon the present occasion; for Charles had no sooner involved him in hostilities with

* May, III. xxx.

France,

France, than he broke through all his engagements, and exposed the army of his royal ally to the most imminent danger. CHAP.
XX.

Considering himself therefore as completely released from every tie, Edward returned home, after accepting an annual *pension* of thirty thousand crowns from the king of France*, which English pride was pleased to dignify with the more flattering appellation of *tribute*.

Notwithstanding every effort to conquer nature, it was impossible for Charles long to restrain the impetuosity of his temper, or to support a character totally foreign to his constitutional habits. His unguarded conduct, when intelligence was first brought to him of the execution of Hagenbach, fully opened the eyes of the Swiss, and convinced them, that his apparent moderation was the result of artifice. In a paroxysm of rage, he exhorted the brother of his deceased favourite to revenge his death with implacable fury. Conformably to this advice, Stephen de Hagenbach as-

* Hume, Hist. Eng. III. xxii

CHAP. XX. assembled a body of Burgundian cavalry, and invaded the Sundgau at their head.

All the inhabitants, who had neglected to seek shelter in some fortified town, were massacred without distinction of age or sex, and their dwellings plundered, and given up to the flames.

The Helvetic diet, then sitting at Lucerne, upon being made acquainted with this sudden attack, summoned the cantons to take the field. In an instant the whole confederacy was under arms, with the single exception of Unterwalden, which on account of some recent misunderstanding with Sigismund, refused to engage in the war. This decisive conduct was productive of the most salutary consequences. The duchess of Savoy despatched an ambassador to Lucerne, with offers of mediation, accompanied by the strongest assurances of neutrality, in case her benevolent endeavours should fail of success.

In spite of her near relationship to the king of France, Jolanda secretly favoured the Burgundian cause, though there are not wanting writers, who attribute her behaviour

haviour to duplicity. By preserving a ^{CHAP.} good understanding with Charles, she ^{XX.} secured a powerful protector under every vicissitude of fortune. But whatever may have been her secret views, she acted her part with such consummate skill, that her attachment to the interests of the duke of Burgundy, appeared to those, who had the nearest access to her person, to be the offspring of affection and not of policy.*

Subtle

* An innovating spirit of criticism is the characteristic feature of modern literature, and was never before carried to so ridiculous an excess. From a science founded on the basis of truth, and calculated to establish a just criterion for the appreciation of historical facts, criticism is now converted into a vehicle for scepticism, and made use of to propagate the most dangerous opinions. That important discoveries have actually taken place in almost every branch of human knowledge, and are due to the researches of modern genius, all those inventions which simplify labor, and facilitate the operations of industry, abundantly testify. Nor are our improvements confined to mechanics alone; mathematics, astronomy, and navigation, are rapidly advancing toward perfection; while chemistry may be regarded as a new creation, which opens an extensive field to the inquisitive eye of philosophy. All this we readily admit, and feel an honest pride in contemplating the pro-

P 3

gress

CHAP. Subtle however as Jolanda supposed
 XX. herself, she was not sufficiently cunning
 to dupe the plain understanding of the
 unlettered Swiss. They had convincing
 proofs of her treachery, as her subjects
 in spite of all her assurances to the con-
 trary were daily enrolling under the Bur-
 gundian standard.

Being resolutely fixed to encounter every
 danger, rather than submit to the tyranny
 of Charles, the confederates sent a herald
 with a declaration of war, which according
 to the custom of those times, was delivered
 to the governor of Blamont, the nearest
 frontier town.*

The duke of Burgundy was still oc-
 cupied in the siege of Nuys, and, when
 the messenger arrived from Blamont, was

gress of the human intellect. But that we are more ac-
 curate judges of the Homeric style, than the enlightened
 citizens of Athens, or more intimately acquainted with the
 arts, the government, or the philosophy of Greece, than
 those who frequented the academy or the portico, is a po-
 sition to which we cannot accede, though supported by
 the joint contributions of Gallic wit, and of German in-
 dustry.

* Mallet, II. 158.

giving

giving orders for a general assault. His countenance, previously flushed with animation, in an instant turned pale with passion. He gasped for breath. At length recovering the faculty of speech, he commanded the messenger to repeat his words. He then burst into a paroxysm of fury, and swore to inflict on the audacious rebels such signal chastisement as should confound democracy for ever.*

The Swiss, with a view of inflaming the public spirit by some enterprise of vigour, had already laid siege to Hericourt, which was occupied by a Burgundian garrison. After the Austrian artillery† however had played upon the town for some days without effect, unaccustomed to the hardships of war at that inclement season of the year, the Helvetic militia grew weary of the undertaking, and demanded to be immediately led to an assault, or suffered

* Comines.

† The Austrians now, for the first time, assumed the *white cross*, in token of their alliance with the Helvetic republics. (Mallet.)

CHAP. to return to the enjoyments of domestic
XX. comfort. Hence, if the Burgundians had confined themselves to defensive operations, the enemy would have been constrained to raise the siege. Fortunately for the Swiss, the impetuosity of Romont disdained to temporise with a foe, whom he had been taught to despise. He thought it unworthy of the Burgundian name to suffer the invaders, after having rashly ventured to insult his master, to retire in safety.

Impelled by this intemperate spirit, he drew all the troops from the neighbouring garrisons, and finding himself at the head of thirty thousand men, marched directly to the relief of Hericourt. From their camp, the confederates beheld thick volumes of smoke ascending from burning hamlets, and anticipated the approach of a hostile army. Resolving at all events not to be taken unprepared, they left only a small detachment to protect their baggage, and advanced to meet the foe.

The nature of the country, which was intersected by almost impenetrable woods, rendered

rendered it impossible for an army to move CHAP.
XX.
in a regular body. Romont's plan, however, was skilfully concerted; the various columns being instructed to proceed by different roads, and to meet under the walls of Hericourt. But before a junction could be effected, a detachment of Swiss fell in with the column, which was commanded by Romont in person, and charged them with such impetuosity, that they were instantaneously routed.* The main body thus broken, the other detachments, which arrived successively, made little resistance; and the confederates on the following morning resumed their position before the town of Hericourt, which being now deprived of every hope of succour, surrendered without farther resistance.†

As all apprehensions on the side of England were now at an end, Louis resolved to employ the whole force of France for the destruction of his less politic rival. The emperor likewise, on his solicitation, had taken the field at the head of a nume-

* Stettler, May.

† May, III. xxxii.

CHAP. rous army, and was actually marching to
 XX. the relief of Nuys. The Swiss menaced
 Franche Comté, while the duke of Lorraine made an irruption into the duchy of Luxembourg, and threatened the capital.*

1475. Early in the ensuing year, at a time when the severity of the weather seemed absolutely to preclude all regular operations, the Swiss profited by the supineness of the enemy to cross the Jura, and penetrating without opposition into Franche Comté, laid waste the country to the very gates of Besançon. Pontarlier was stormed, and the whole garrison put to the sword.

The pride of the Burgundians was deeply wounded ; they felt all the ignominy of their situation, and resolved by some brilliant enterprise to retrieve their tarnished honour. But all their plans were conducted with such improvident rashness, that they failed in every effort to recover Pontarlier, though they repeatedly attempted it with a considerable force.†

* May. † Id. ib.

No sooner did the rigour of winter abate, CHAP.
XX.
than the Helvetic standard was again displayed, and several expeditions were undertaken with an unvarying tide of success. Granson, Montagny, Echallens, and Orbe were captured in the course of a few weeks; all towns belonging to the house of Chalons, and in alliance with the duke of Burgundy. As they approached the latter fortress, they were met by the magistrates, who presented to them the keys with the most abject expressions of terror. Submission ever gives a claim to mercy with the brave. A promise of pardon was accordingly granted, and the victors proceeded to take possession of the gates. But to their astonishment they found the town in flames, and the garrison retired to the citadel. Rendered furious by an event, which they justly regarded as a palpable breach of the convention, they demanded instantly to be led to the assault. The signal was given. After a bloody conflict the citadel was carried, and the victors entered it over heaps of slain. Yielding to the dictates of revenge, they gave no quarter.

CHAP. quarter. All, who fell into their hands,
^{XX.}
were either put to the sword, or thrown from the battlements to perish in the flames, which they had themselves so wantonly lighted up.

The Helvetic diet now resolved to carry on an offensive campaign. Fresh troops were accordingly assembled to invade the Burgundian territory, which directed their march along the banks of the Doux. This expedition was distinguished by no memorable event, except the death of Diesbach, who is generally regarded as the author of the war. Though severely wounded during the siege of Lilla, he continued to discharge all the duties of a general with unremitting activity; totally unmindful of his own person, when the interests of his country were at stake. A contagious fever having broken out among the troops, he visited the sufferers in their tents, provided for their wants with parental anxiety, and at length fell a victim in the cause of humanity,¹ universally regretted by the whole army.*

* May, III. xxxv.

Hitherto,

Hitherto, that equivocal intercourse, CHAP.
XX. which is characterised in diplomatic language by the fallacious term of *amity*, had subsisted between the Helvetic republics and the court of Turin. But the suspicious conduct of the duchess, and the open hostility of Romont, rendered the duration of peace a blessing no longer to be expected. Had both governments however been really desirous to avoid a rupture, the task would have proved not a little difficult; as there existed a degree of acrimony in the public mind, which first burst forth in partial feuds between the frontier villages of Berne and the inhabitants of the Pais de Vaud; and was daily spreading its influence over a wider surface. Unprepared as yet to throw aside the mask, Jolanda was seriously alarmed, and sent a confidential minister to Berne, with instructions to varnish over whatever was capable of being represented in a favourable light, and by intrigues and promises and bold assertions to qualify the rest.*

* May, III. *anvi.*

He

CHAP.
XX.

He was directed also to enter into a secret correspondence with the other cantons, in order if possible to excite their jealousy against the preponderating influence of Berne; and to intimate the practicability of still accommodating all differences with the duke of Burgundy, provided they would confide their interests to his mistress' friendly mediation. Even Romont himself no longer hesitated to visit Berne, and is said to have employed such efficacious arguments in justification of the measures of the court of Turin, that a sudden alteration took place in the language and conduct of the senate. These artifices would have probably succeeded to their projected extent, had not the government been privately admonished of the impending danger by the count of Bresse, whose intelligence was corroborated by the elevation of Romont to the dignity of marshal of Burgundy, a post of the highest confidence and distinction. From this period, he no longer deigned to disguise his sentiments, but openly enlisted soldiers for the Helvetic war.*

* Id. ib.

Justly

Justly incensed at his nefarious conduct, the confederates resolved to chastise his duplicity, before Charles was in a situation to move. For this purpose, they laid siege to Morat, and made themselves masters of it in a few days. Proceeding onward with uninterrupted success, they over-ran the adjacent country, as the inhabitants either by prompt submission deprecated their wrath; or under the influence of fear, fled with their most valuable effects to Estavayer, as to a place of security.*

This town, under the allurements of plunder, it was determined immediately to invest. Confiding in the valour of his troops, the governor refused to capitulate, though the besiegers swore if a single gun were fired against them, to give no quarter: a menace subsequently executed with savage punctuality, as the defenceless prisoners were thrown into the lake, when the sword was tired with slaughter†.

* May.

† Of the ferocity of the Swiss the following anecdote is related by Mallet. An executioner, he says, followed the army, who from motives of compassion suffered some of the prisoners to escape; and for this humane act he was cut in pieces by the soldiers. (II. 168.)]

The

CHAP. The conquest of Estavayer was followed
 XX. by that of Iverdun, and Ecleès, the latter
 a strong fortress commanding one of the
 most difficult passes of the Jura. The gar-
 rison of the former were suffered to redeem
 their lives and property by the payment of
 an enormous ransom; but the less fortu-
 nate defenders of Ecleès, were cut in
 pieces to a man, because they had refused
 to sully their reputation by surrendering
 upon disgraceful terms*!

Such was now the terror which accom-
 panied the Helvetic arms, that few places
 ventured to resist their attack. Without
 the aid of artillery the confederates speedily
 carried the strongest fortresses. Astonished
 by exploits, which almost surpassed the
 bounds of human valour, the enemy fled
 every where at their approach.

Too weak to hazard a battle, Romont
 retreated to Morges, where he hoped to
 maintain himself till the arrival of some
 reinforcements. But the rapid progress of
 the enemy disconcerted all his plans, and

* Mallet, II. 169.

compelled

compelled him not only to quit his advantageous position, but likewise to abandon Geneva to its fate. Its opulent citizens beheld with dismay the approach of an army, not less distinguished by the love of plunder, than by that of glory. Determined to leave nothing unattempted to avert the storm, the suppliant magistrates repaired to the Helvetic camp, and offered by the surrender of a part of their wealth, to purchase the unmolested enjoyment of the rest. The demands of the Swiss at first, by their extravagance, almost precluded the chance of success; but by degrees they relaxed, and finally agreed to accept thirty thousand florins, as the price of redemption*.

While the confederates were thus actively employed in humbling the allies of the duke of Burgundy, that imprudent prince was sacrificing his bravest troops in fruitless attempts upon Nays. The approach of the imperial army at length awakened him to a sense of danger, and

* Mallet says, "26,000."

CHAP. to a conviction of the necessity of peace.

XX. By promising his daughter to the archduke Maximilian, he effected a reconciliation with the imperial court, and at the same time concluded a long truce with the king of France.*

Lewis, however, was too shrewd a politician to lay aside the mask of honesty, even at a time when he set all moral obligations at defiance. With a view of still preserving appearances, he caused an article to be inserted, by which his allies were invited to accede to the treaty, and a convenient space was allowed for that purpose. Dreading nothing however so much as a reconciliation between Charles and the Swiss, he studiously declined to employ any arguments, which might appease their resentment; while he gave a secret promise to the Duke, that in the event of their refusal, he would leave him at perfect liberty to prosecute his schemes, and even allow his troops a free passage through the northern provinces

* Comines, IV. xi.

of France. History, which in fact is little CHAP. XX.
 more than a disgusting narrative of the crimes and follies of the great, exhibits few actions more degrading than this to the character of man. To forsake a people, whom he had previously seduced into danger, required an excess of perfidy, which has been rarely attained by the most profligate of mortals.

Feeling himself now secure on the side of France, the Duke of Burgundy began seriously to prepare for the conquest of Switzerland, and ordered an army to be immediately assembled on the borders of Lorraine.

The report of his immense preparations, having at length reached the Helvetic diet, it was deemed expedient to collect the scattered columns in some central position, where they might be ready to act as circumstances should require. This plan, adopted by the collective wisdom of Switzerland, evinces the little progress which she had hitherto made in the art of war, considered as a science of calculation. The garrisons of Granson and Iverdun

CHAP. were reinforced; while Orbe and Joigne,
 XX. though places of equal importance, were abandoned. In excuse for a measure so repugnant to every principle of rational policy, the government alleged the impossibility of providing soldiers for the defence of towns so remote. Yet remote as they appeared, they commanded passes of the most difficult access, which if properly guarded, must have materially obstructed the operations of the enemy.

With an army, formidable in point of numbers, but exhausted by the fatigues and sufferings of a winter campaign, Charles overran the duchy of Lorraine, and entered Nancy in triumph. Delighted with the situation of that city, and still more with the reception he met with, the exulting victor signified his intention of rewarding the loyalty of his newly acquired subjects by frequently residing among them.

1476. But neither the severity of the season, the festivities of victory, nor the debilitated condition of his troops, could retard his impatience. Having passed the month of January at Besançon, in order to com-

plete his military arrangements, in defiance of the elements, he crossed the mountains in the beginning of February. The approach of so numerous an army, headed by a commander so enterprising, spread universal consternation, not only throughout the Helvetic cantons, but over all the adjacent states. The margrave of Hochberg, notwithstanding his advanced age, repaired to the Burgundian camp, imploring the haughty invader to listen to overtures of peace. Charles received the proposal with inflexible pride, and turned from the venerable supplicant, without even deigning him a reply. Convinced of the inefficacy of all farther communication, and prevented by the weight of years from taking an active part in the war, the margrave judiciously placed his dominions under the protection of Berne, though his son at that time held a distinguished post in the Burgundian army.

According to Comines, an author who never intentionally deceives, the Swiss were so much alarmed at the impending danger, that they sent ambassadors to

Q 3

Charles

CHAP. Charles to deprecate his wrath in terms
^{XX.}
of the most abject submission, offering to evacuate all their conquests in the Pais de Vaud, and farther assuring him that their barren mountains afforded nothing worthy of his attention, the spurs and bits used by his cavalry far exceeded in value the aggregate wealth of Helvetia.

But as the most authentic writers of Switzerland positively deny this assertion, Comines (who professes to speak on the authority of others,) was, probably, misinformed. The magnanimity, invariably displayed by the Helvetic people from the earliest period of their union, gives reason to suppose, that they were incapable of betraying such a signal want of courage, or of acting in a manner so grossly inconsistent with the dignity of an independent nation.

As the confederates retired, the enemy advanced. Romont led the van, and descending the Jura by the defile of Joigne, directed his march toward Iverdun, where he had for some time carried on a clandestine correspondence with several of the principal


principal inhabitants. Through the treachery or the negligence of the sentinels, he got possession of one of the gates, and summoned the garrison to surrender; who, finding themselves unable to defend the town, had shut themselves up in the castle. This fortress, from its advantageous situation, might easily have been maintained against superior numbers; but through the most unpardonable neglect, the provisions and ammunition, which had been collected for a siege, were left in the town. Disdaining still to lay down their arms, these fearless patriots unanimously resolved to attempt a sally, and endeavour by the plunder of the adjacent houses to procure a temporary supply. This enterprize, hazardous in the extreme, was worthy of a people, who defended the hospital of St. James against the numerous legions of France. Preparations were now made for its immediate execution. The gates flew open. The draw-bridge descended, and gave passage to a handful of soldiers. The enemy stood motionless at the sight. That

CHAP. so small a body * should entertain the idea
XX. of attacking an army, at least twenty times more numerous than themselves, was an effort of valour too romantic to be believed by credulity herself. That they were preparing to throw themselves on the mercy of the besiegers, neither their former achievements, nor the intrepidity of their present appearance, rendered probable: "Yield, madmen! for resistance is vain," resounded from the Burgundian ranks. They answered, "Never," and a volley of arrows confirmed the proud defiance. Few, indeed, were their missile weapons; but no sooner did an enemy fall, than they tore the arrow from his side, to aim it at another foe. The advantage of situation prevented the possibility of their being surrounded, and when unable any longer to maintain the conflict, or satisfied with their booty, in the castle they were assured

* The numbers, which are differently represented, did not, according to any account, exceed 200 men. This however seems evidently to contradict a former assertion, that the garrison of Iverdun had been reinforced.

of a ready retreat. Thither they at length CHAP.
 retired, after having performed deeds, ^{XX.} which if recorded by the pen of a Thucydides, would have placed them on a level with the heroes of Thermopylæ. Exulting in the scanty pittance, which they had so nobly earned, they now derided from the battlements the impotent fury of the enemy. Romont, however, aware of the impracticability of carrying the fortress by storm, and being informed of the approach of a numerous column of Swiss, drew off his forces.

Meanwhile another detachment of Burgundians having entered Granson by treachery, surprised the governor in his bed, and threatened him with instant death, if the garrison should attempt to resist. But finding their menaces received with contempt, and that instead of courting a dishonourable respite by the sacrifice of duty, the gallant commander exhorted his troops not to sully his reputation through weak affection for his person, they thought it prudent to abandon the enterprise. Alarmed at the peril to which places of such importance

CHAP. portance had been exposed, the Swiss
 XX.  availed themselves of the opportunity to throw succours into both; though they subsequently withdrew their forces from the first, in order to strengthen the garrison of the latter.

Scarcely had this measure been carried into effect, when the duke of Burgundy ascended the Jura. His mighty army*, collected from various nations, had been trained to the strictest discipline by many years of service, and was accoutred with ostentatious splendour. Accompanied by ambassadors from several of the German and Italian courts, he flattered himself that he should facilitate the execution of his future projects, by impressing upon them exaggerated ideas of his riches and power. With this view he kept the most sumptuous table, was served on the most costly plate, and amidst the toils and perils of a


* Historians differ widely respecting the amount of this host; some calculating it at 100,000 men, while others reduce it to half that number. Comines says, that the duke of Burgundy besieged Granson with 50,000; while May estimates his army at 70,000.

winter- •

winter-campaign, partook of every delicacy CHAP.
 that a royal palace could have afforded, in XX.

the genial seasons of summer and of peace. His pernicious example encouraged among his subjects a taste for luxury ; so that the Burgundian camp is said to have resembled a populous city, with all it's amusements, and it's prodigality. While merchants and manufacturers flocked thither from all quarters with their most precious wares, the daughters of prostitution, with their venal charms, inflamed the universal licentiousness. In a word, the fables of eastern extravagance were realised on the barren mountains of Helvetia, among men whose business was destruction, and whose pursuit was glory. Every thing appeared effeminate, except the spirit of the commander, who formed a proud exception to the generality of despots and debauchees, as he possessed all the firmness and intrepidity of a hero.

After wasting a few days at Orbe, he appeared before Granson on the ninth of February. His pavilion was erected on an eminence, whose altered name still attests
 his

CHAP. his overthrow. This position, which com-
XX.  manded an uninterrupted view of the adjacent country, with the magnificent bason below, till the prospect was terminated by stupendous mountains, was highly eligible in every respect, as it maintained an easy communication with his hereditary dominions, whence he could at all times draw abundant supplies*.

Notwithstanding the most obstinate resistance, the town was carried by storm; but as the castle still held out, the duke commanded his artillery to play incessantly upon it, protesting that he would not stir till it was levelled with the ground.

Meanwhile, various accidents occurred to depress the spirits of the besieged. The commander was seized with a dangerous illness, which totally prevented him from attending to his duty. The most expert engineer was slain. A magazine of pow-

* He had been already guilty, however, of one fatal error; but it proceeded rather from mistaken principles, than from defective judgment. Distrusting the fidelity of his own subjects, he had conferred the post of honour upon his mercenary troops.

der exploded. A flotilla, destined to convey both men and ammunition, was compelled to retire, without having effected its purpose.

Availing himself of the despondency created by this series of untoward events, Charles resolved to employ, what he possibly might deem an ingenious stratagem, but which men of unbiassed judgment must regard as an unpardonable breach of honesty and honour. Under cover of a flag of truce, a Burgundian officer was admitted to a parley. Expert in all the arts of intrigue, and anxious to obtain his master's favour, he represented the condition of the Helvetic army as every way hopeless. Their councils, he said, were distracted by dissensions, and their operations, in consequence languid and ill-conducted. He farther assured them, on the word of a soldier, that Friburg had surrendered, and that Berne itself closely invested, was incapable of resisting for many days.

Perceiving the governor, thunderstruck by these accumulated disasters, the perfidious

CHAP.
XX.

CHAP. dious envoy availed himself of the delu-
 XX.
 sion which he had created, to press him with additional arguments. "In your insulated situation what hope," he added, with an air of candour, "can you entertain of escaping destruction, except from the generosity of a prince who admires virtue even in a foe? Throw yourself upon his mercy, and I pledge my honour for your safety." The tone of confidence, in which he spoke, was calculated to deceive. He accepted a present to secure his interest with the duke, and returned with the news of his disgraceful success to his impatient master.

After laying down their arms, the troops were permitted to quit the fortress without molestation. But no sooner had they passed the gates, than they were surrounded by the enemy, and informed that they were prisoners, as the duke refused to ratify the articles of capitulation. Pasting after revenge, Charles ordered a council of war to decide on the fate of the captives. The result of a deliberation, carried on under such auspices, may be easily foreseen.

foreseen. Regardless of a solemn obligation contracted by an accredited envoy, and unmindful of the glory of the Burgundian name, the members of this sanguinary tribunal unanimously voted for death; and on the ensuing morning, the devoted victims, without exception of rank, perished by the hand of the executioner.

Meanwhile the senate of Berne carried on their levies with unceasing activity, and having assembled a body of eight thousand men, conferred the command of this little army on the *avoyer* Scharnachthal, with directions to remain in a defensive posture, till the contingents should join from the other cantons. For this purpose, he took an advantageous position near the lake of Morat, where he determined to wait their arrival. But that energetic spirit, which animated his fellow-citizens, was far from characterising equally the other members of the confederacy. Though repeatedly summoned in conformity to a recent treaty, to take the field, the cities of the Lower League were shamefully remiss in their preparations. Some of the cantons were

CHAP.
XX.

CHAP. were so blind to the impending danger, as
 XX.
 ~~~~~ to stipulate that their troops should not  
 be employed in the defence of towns;  
 though they readily consented, that they  
 should participate in all the active services  
 of a campaign.

At last, however, after various delays, Scharnachthal was joined by his promised reinforcements\*, and marched to Neuchatel, where he received intelligence of the surrender of Granson. The bloody perfidy of Charles excited the strongest indignation in every breast, and convinced them that no alternative was left but slavery or death.

\* According to May, the Helvetic force consisted of 23,400 men, and was furnished in the following proportions: 8,000 Berners, under Scharnachthal and Halwyl; 1,500 from Soleure, Friburg, and Bienne, commanded by Vogt and Faucigny; 1,800 from Neuchatel, under the orders of Matter, a patrician of Berne; 4,300 Zurickers led by Waldman and Landenberg; 1,800 Lucerners under the avoyer Hasfurther; 3,400 from the forest-cantons commanded by Arnold, Reding, and Tschudi; 3,600 from Schaffhausen, St. Gal, and Appenzel, under Tanner and Trüllerey. Of these about 2,000 were detached from the main army. May, III.

The

The duke of Burgundy now quitted the strong position, which he occupied at Granson, and advanced to Vaucernarus. This measure was fruitlessly opposed by his most experienced generals. Hurried on by a resistless impulse, he rejected with disdain their salutary warnings, and exclaimed in a tone of presumption, "By St. George! these dogs shall not escape! Their country, indeed, is a beggarly conquest; but, whatever it contains, shall be your's." He then issued orders for an immediate attack.

At the dawn of day the army was put in motion, without any previous enquiry into the strength or position of the enemy. The van, consisting chiefly of cavalry, was commanded by Chateau-Guyon. The prince of Orange led the main body, and the confidential Romont was imprudently placed at the head of the rear\*.

On the side of the Swiss the van, composed of the militia of Schweitz, was posted on an eminence near a convent of Car-

\* May, III. xlviii.



CHAP. thusian friars, under which the enemy were  
XX. obliged to pass. Their flank was covered by inaccessible mountains, extending to the shores of the lake. The only practicable passage was through a defile, along a road obstructed by enormous masses of congealed snow, intermixed with ponderous fragments of native granite, which had been detached by accident from the impending cliffs.

Determined to dislodge the enemy from this advantageous position. Chateau-Guyon ordered a company of archers to ascend the rock, and to commence the attack. When the Swiss beheld them advancing, they fell on their knees, according to ancient custom, and recommended their cause with fervid devotion to the God of Hosts. Charles had now reached the scene of action, and seeing them in the posture of supplication, mistook their motive—  
“Look there,” cried he with transport,  
“they already implore our mercy. But,  
“by St. George, it is now too late! Not  
“a bone of them shall repose in consecrated ground.” The soldiers, who heard him,

him, shouted in unison with the presumptuous threat, and a squadron of horse was despatched to cut the rabble of petitioners in pieces. CHAP.  
XX.

Meanwhile the confederates, whose numbers were every moment increasing, formed themselves into a solid phalanx, with their standards in the midst. This unexpected sight irritated the duke to such a pitch of fury, that he led his troops in person to three successive charges, in all of which they were repulsed with considerable loss.

He now determined to regain his former position; convinced that the event would be no longer doubtful, if he could draw the Swiss from their narrow defiles into a spot, where his cavalry could act with effect. The signal was in consequence given for a retreat; but the confusion which it occasioned, induced the enemy to descend from the heights, and attack the Burgundians with such impetuosity, that their line was completely broken. In an instant, the tumult became universal; the invaders threw down their arms, and fled toward

R 2

Granson,

CHAP. Granson, abandoning their artillery, their  
 XX  
 tents, and their baggage.

Their dastardly conduct was beheld by their sovereign with a mixed sensation of indignation and shame. Galloping through the disordered ranks, he explained to the officers the motives of his retreat, and endeavoured by threats and promises to arrest the flight of his disheartened troops.\* But all his efforts were vain. The Swiss pressed forward with augmented fury, bearing down all before them; so that, if they had not been exhausted by a long and rapid march, and overburthened with the weight of heavy armour, few among the Burgundians would have escaped. It is possible also that the rich booty, which was abandoned to the cupidity of the conquerors, contributed not a little to the preservation of its vanquished owners. Apprehensive of losing their share in the spoil, the victors† desisted from the pursuit, and hastened back to partake in a

\* May,

† Memoires de Comines, V. i.

triumph

triumph more gratifying than that of a CHAP.  
slaughtered foe. XX.

Philip de Comines records the event of this memorable battle, in words highly descriptive of Charles' situation. "The duke of Burgundy," says he, "in one single day, was stripped both of wealth and honour."\* His loss however, in point of numbers, proved far less considerable, than might have been supposed, as it scarcely exceeded two thousand men.† Unable through fatigue to continue their flight, several of the Burgundian knights threw themselves into Granson, where they were sacrificed by the victors to the *manes* of its murdered garrison.

On the following day, twelve of the

\* Ib.

† Comines is accused by a modern historian of want of accuracy, in estimating the loss of the Burgundians at no more than *seven* men. But justice to the memory of a writer, whose simplicity lays claim to the highest praise, compels us to observe, that Comines speaks only of the *heavy-armed cavalry, or men at arms*, who were all of noble extraction. He never mentions the infantry. (*Planeta*, II. 27.)

CHAP. XX. Helvetic captains received the honour of knighthood on the field of battle. On the same field the whole army, impressed with the liveliest gratitude, devoutly offered up their thanks to the Giver of all victory; and the delightful reflection, that Helvetic freedom was established by the loss of no more than one hundred of their countrymen, threw a charm over conquest, with which it is too rarely invested.

The plunder of the Burgundian camp, was estimated at upward of a million of florins. Beside a hundred and eighty cannon of different calibre, and six hundred standards, four hundred tents were found, many of them lined with the richest velvets, and decorated with the most costly embroidery. The duke's pavilion contained a sumptuous service of plate, a profusion of the finest linen from the looms of Flanders, his magnificent wardrobe, his private signet, a sword ornamented with precious stones, the insignia of various orders, an immense sum of money, a folio breviary, bound in velvet with golden clasps; a box of the same metal, filled with

with relics and adorned with gems of in-CHAP.  
 estimable worth; and a chaplet, every XX.  
 grain of which was a jewel.\*

A few days after the battle, a peasant picked up a diamond of uncommon size and beauty, in the road between Granson and Iverdun, which had been dropped by the duke in his flight; but so ignorant was the finder of it's real value, that he sold it for a florin to a priest.†

But while the giddy and unthinking,  
 who

\* May (III. xlii.) pretends, that the booty amounted to the value of thirty-three millions of French livres, reckoning money at it's present standard.

† It is singular, that the identity of this invaluable gem was never ascertained in a satisfactory manner; though many industrious antiquaries have wasted their learned labours in the research. Watteville, who appears to have investigated the subject with far more attention than it merits, pretends to have traced the jewel from William of Diesbach, who purchased it for five thousand florins, to the duke of Milan, by whom it was sold for thirty thousand ducats to pope Julius II. Du Fresnoy, the editor of Comines, asserts on the contrary, that it is the famous diamond in the crown of France, so well known by the name of the *Sancy* (from Harley de Sancy, who purchased it in Portugal); while Meister affirms, that a MS. has been recently discovered in the library at Munich,

CHAP. who even in the most polished countries  
 XX. constitute the majority, considered prosperity as the necessary consequence of increasing wealth, the more enlightened few lamented the melancholy change, which riches produced in the views and feelings of Helvetia. The Burgundian spoils, like the fabled box of Pandora, diffused every malignant passion through her tranquil vallies, to the utter subversion of that amiable simplicity, which constituted her characteristic beauty. Thenceforth, war became the favourite pursuit of her daring and degenerate offspring.

Severe indeed was the blow, which from which it appears that the jewel in question, after having found it's way into the wealthy family of Fugger, was disposed of to Henry VIII. of England, and by his infatuated daughter presented to her husband Philip; since which period it has been constantly preserved among the treasures of Spain, and is at present—where? It is difficult to meet with three opinions more contradictory to each other. But, fortunately, the solution is of little moment to the world; as nothing can be more immaterial than to decide, whether the button of a madman's hat now adorns the crown of tyranny, or of superstition. Mallet, II. 191.

Charles

Charles had sustained in the defiles of Vau-<sup>CHAP.</sup>  
marcus; but the loss of reputation, by <sup>XX.</sup>  
which it was accompanied, was a misfortune more mischievous in it's consequences, because it was more difficult of reparation. His arms, lately the terror of every European state, were deprived in a single day of that mighty influence of opinion, which operates so powerfully upon the human heart. His star, which had hitherto shone the brightest luminary of the political hemisphere, was set to rise no more. Every day some friend forsook his cause, if men connected by the bonds of interest, or of fear, can merit that sacred title. Abandoned, or betrayed by all his adherents, he beheld himself an insulated individual, amidst the mighty ruin, which his own presumption had caused. René, king of Sicily, who had publicly announced his intention of ceding to him the county of Provence, was no sooner acquainted with his defeat, than he meanly revoked his engagement, and went over to the king of France.\* Even the faithful Jolanda thought

\* Mallet, II. 195.

it



CHAP. it prudent to have recourse to the dissimu-  
 XX.  
 ~~~~~ lation, which seems to have been hereditary  
 in the family of Charles VII. ; and, apparently deserting her unfortunate friend, she courted her brother with so much assiduity, that the most suspicious of men was deceived. While the duke of Milan,* whose contemptible policy was ever regulated by the smiles of Fortune, basely attempted by a considerable bribe to induce Lewis to declare war against a prince, whom he had treated in prosperity as his dearest friend.

Lewis, however, had other views; nor did he yet think it advisable to throw aside the mask. At the commencement of hostilities between Charles and the Helvetic cantons, he had removed to Lyons, in order to be nearer to the scene of action. From that city, after the battle, he sent couriers to all the courts in Christendom, with exaggerated accounts of the Burgundian loss. He likewise despatched a confidential minister to the Helvetic diet, with warm congratulations on their success,

* Galeazzo Sforza.

accompanied

accompanied by exhortations and promises, calculated to engage them to a continuance of the war. But disgusted by his temporising policy, they returned for answer, that unless he immediately fulfilled his engagements by openly declaring in their favour, a due regard to their own safety would compel them to conclude a peace on the best conditions which circumstances would allow.* This determination destroyed the brilliant projects, which he had formed for subverting the power of Burgundy, and rendered all his artifices necessary, to prevent an immediate rupture with one of the belligerent states.

Meanwhile adversity operated with so much violence on the feelings of Charles, that according to the testimony of Comines, he never recovered the perfect use of his intellects. Resolutely bent upon obliterating his past disgrace, he exerted all the energies of his mind in devising means for the prosecution of the war. Having collected his scattered forces, he or-

* Comines, V. ii.

dered

CHAP. deder the bells to be taken down from the
 XX. churches, and employed in founding cannon;* and despatched officers of trust into the different provinces, to solicit supplies of men and money. But their reception was by no means such, as his impetuous and sanguine temper required.

Oppressed and impoverished by his frantic schemes, the Flemings took courage to remonstrate on the rigour of his administration, and the prodigality of his expenditure. Their complaints, however, though urged in the manly tone which becomes a generous people, were softened by the solemn assertion, that they were, at all times, ready to risk their lives and fortunes in his behalf, when summoned to resist an invading foe.

After remaining at Noseroy for nearly three weeks, Charles with his constitutional impatience, again crossed the Jura, and hastened to Lausanne, where his troops were ordered to assemble. By the beginning of May, he found himself at

* Mallet, II. 197.

the head of an army, scarcely less numerous than the former. The duchess of Savoy sent him tents and clothing, accompanied by a considerable reinforcement of men, and large pecuniary supplies.

He now resumed his habitual arrogance, and with anticipating liberality divided the Helvetic territory among his allies and favourites, promising Berne to his faithful Jolanda, and Friburg to the undeserving Romont. His intentions being no longer confined within the circle of his confidential friends, a diet met at Lucerne, in order to settle a general plan of defence. The garrisons of Friburg and Granson received considerable augmentations, and both places were victualled for a siege. But as Morat was supposed with reason to be the principal object of the enemy's attack, Adrian de Bubenberg was unanimously appointed to that important command.

To the talents and virtues of that eminent statesman the reader is no stranger; though he has hitherto been taught to consider him as a friend and favourer of the Burgundian cause. On account of this real

or

CHAP. or supposed partiality, we have seen him
XX.
~~~~~ rigorously, if not unjustly, treated by the  
adverse faction, and banished to his pa-  
trimonial estate. But the perils, to which  
his country was now exposed, induced the  
senate to forget all former causes of com-  
plaint; and so exalted was the opinion  
which they entertained of his excellence,  
that they believed him capable of forget-  
ting them too. The high reputation of their  
general gave unbounded confidence to the  
garrison, who swore implicit obedience to  
his orders; while the senate invested him  
with unlimited authority, and gave him at  
the same time a positive promise of speedy  
and effectual support.

Resolved if possible to realize the hopes  
of his country, Bubenbergh exhorted the  
soldiers to perform their duty with the  
fortitude becoming men, whom their fel-  
low-citizens had honoured with their most  
distinguished trust. "Should any of you,"  
said he, "observe in his comrade the  
"smallest symptoms of fear, let him stab  
"the coward to the heart. I mean not to  
"exempt myself from this general sentence.  
"No;

"No; let your general perish, if his conduct proves him unworthy to live."

CHAP.  
XX.  


Having heard of no considerable force that was prepared to oppose him, the duke of Burgundy advanced by rapid marches into the centre of Switzerland, with as little precaution, as if he had expected to meet with no resistance. On the eleventh of June, he appeared in sight of Morat, determined to commence the conquest of Helvetia by the capture of that important place.

Bubenberg was no sooner informed of his approach, than he sallied forth with a select troop, and falling unexpectedly on an insulated corps, repulsed them with considerable slaughter. This little success by inspiring the Helvetic soldiers with increasing confidence, was serviceable to the common cause. And an event, which took place in another quarter, strongly confirmed the favourable impression, as it was attended with circumstances, far more humiliating to the military character of their Burgundian foes.

At

CHAP.

XX.  
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At the head of four thousand men Romont advanced without interruption to Anet, a small village situated between the lakes of Morat and Neuchatel, carrying off or destroying whatever he met.\* The ruined peasantry beheld his ravages with indignation. Wounded in the tenderest point, they regarded the loss of life as no aggravation of their misery. Assembling therefore in a tumultuous body, they armed themselves with clubs and forks, and such other implements of offence as the exigency of the moment could supply, and rushing upon the invaders compelled them to abandon their booty, and to save themselves by a precipitate flight.

Most of the Swiss historians pretend that the Burgundian army amounted to seventy thousand effective men; but great allowance ought to be made for national vanity. Comines, on the contrary, estimates it at little more than a third of that number; but in this calculation he comprehends neither the engineers, nor the artillery-men,

\* Mallet.

who formed no inconsiderable body. We <sup>CHAP.</sup> may therefore fairly suppose, that Charles' <sup>XX.</sup> force could hardly consist of less than fifty thousand men.

Morat was now invested on every side, except on that bordered by the lake, where the want of vessels prevented the duke from completing the blockade. Charles, with the main body, occupied the heights, to the south of the town; and to the north was stationed the count of Romont, in order to cut off the communication with Berne. Yet in spite of all the vigilance of the besiegers, Bubenbergh found means to inform the senate, that "with no immediate danger to apprehend, he could pledge himself to defend the town, till their preparations were ready for his relief."

This delay however was not of long duration, for in a few days after the receipt of this message, Scharnachthal was in a situation to take the field; when advancing to Gunningen, he got possession of a bridge, which commanded the passage of the Sarne; an event of considerable import-

VOL. III.

S

ance,



CHAP. XX. **ance**, as it contributed essentially to facilitate the future operations of the Helvetic army. Charles now, for the first time, began seriously to believe that the Swiss were preparing to resist, and sent a detachment to recover the post, which through his own imprudence he had lost. But the attempt was too late, as the enemy were so strongly entrenched, that every endeavour to dislodge them proved abortive.

Nor was the duke more fortunate in an attack on Morat. A breach being made after a few days' siege, orders were issued for a general assault; and so confident was he of success, that he marched round the walls in triumph, amidst choruses of martial music, and shouts of premature exultation. But the loss of a thousand of his bravest troops, who perished in the attempt, "changed his hand and checked his pride." The music ceased, and the army, fatigued and harassed, in mournful silence, regained their tents.

Charles had now experienced the inefficacy of force; but, in proportion as his hopes declined, his impatience augmented.

Recurring

Scarcely was the Helvetic standard  
erected at Gunningen, when troops came  
S 2 pouring

CHAP. pouring in from every quarter. Desirous  
 XX. of being present at a battle on the event  
 of which his future destiny seemed to depend, the duke of Lorraine arrived at the head of four hundred cavalry. The counts of Thierstein and Oetingen led three thousand Austrians. Eight hundred horse, belonging to the bishops of Bâle and Strasbourg, were commanded by the gallant Eptingen. The imperial cities of Alsace sent the veteran Herter with fifteen hundred infantry, and several pieces of artillery. And lastly, the count of Gruyeres brought a troop of mountaineers, inured to danger by incessant hardships, and the inclemency of their native snows.\*

Though considerably retarded by the rapid rise of an Alpine torrent, the contingent of Zurich reached the camp in time to partake of the perils and glories of the day. The whole force amounted to upwards of thirty thousand men, four thousand of whom were cavalry.†

\* Chronique de Neuchâtel.

† May, III. xlv.

Early on the twenty-second of June, the leaders of the Helvetic army held a council of war, in which it was determined to commence their operations by attacking the main body of the enemy under the duke in person. Their forces were divided into three columns. The van was led by Halwyl. Waldman commanded the centre; while the rear was entrusted to the experienced Hertenstein, and destined to act as a *corps de reserve*. Amidst a chosen band of spearmen, the Helvetic standard floating in proud defiance, served as a rallying point, in case of any accidental confusion.

The army was now preparing to march, when it was suggested by Herter that, from the numbers and situation of the enemy, it was highly imprudent to run the hazard of a general engagement, as a defeat must be attended with inevitable ruin. Instead of rashly staking the existence of their country upon a single cast, he strongly recommended a defensive system; persuaded that Charles would be shortly compelled by famine to abandon his pre-

CHAP. sent advantageous position, and might then  
 XX. be attacked with a fairer prospect of success.\*

This advice however, though the result of consummate prudence, was rejected with disdain. "A system of protraction and delay," cried Keller of Zurich with a contemptuous smile, "may possibly be conformable to the principles of the tactician: But the military science of our country is merely practical. When we meet an enemy, we fight. Our only object in coming here, is to drive the duke of Burgundy out of Switzerland. If you are alarmed at the difficulty of the undertaking, it is still in your power to avoid it; but if you remain with us, we will soon give you an opportunity to shew of what sort of mettle you are made."†

\* This anecdote alone seems clearly to indicate that the Burgundian army was far superior in numbers to that of the Swiss; a fact, which cannot be doubted, if the accounts were accurate with respect to the slain.

† Mallet. II. 205.

Apprised

Apprised of the enemy's motions, Char-<sup>CHAP.</sup>  
les drew up his forces in order of battle. <sup>XX.</sup>

His infantry, formed into a condensed square, was stationed behind an almost impenetrable hedge, and flanked by a numerous cavalry.

The armies being now in sight of each other, remained for some time in a state of inactivity, neither of them caring to commence the attack. The rain fell in torrents, and as great part of the morning was already consumed, the duke under a conviction that the Swiss had no intention of engaging, ordered his troops to return to their camp. That moment appeared decisive in favour of Helvetia, and Waldman gave the signal for battle.

As the van was advancing with rapid steps, Halwyl recollected that it was the anniversary of the victory of Laupen. Upon which, turning hastily round he exultingly exclaimed, "On this memorable day your forefathers secured their freedom at Laupen! Behold, the savages, who basely murdered your unsuspecting countrymen, before the walls of Gran  
S 4 " son!

CHAP. "son! As their perfidy then met its due

XX.

"reward, so shall their nefarious projects,  
"by the providence of God, be now dis-  
"comfited. To Him, my valiant comrades,  
"let us kneel, and devoutly implore his  
"protection."\*

With these words he fell on his knees, and prayed with fervour. His example was followed by the whole army. The sky was covered with clouds, but while he was yet in the act of supplication, a ray of sunshine broke out. Halwyl availed himself of the casual gleam, to encrease the enthusiasm which he had inspired; and starting up, as if under supernatural influence, cried out, "Our petitions are heard! Our triumph is ordained! The will of heaven is no longer doubtful! Be confident, my friends, and remember that the honour of your wives and daughters, and the liberties of your country are all at stake."

With undaunted alacrity, amidst the thunder of the enemy's artillery, they rushed forward to the indestructible hedge. It

\* Mallet, ib,

disappeared,

disappeared. They seized the cannon, and turned them against the foe. It was the work of an instant. They were opposed by the duke's guards, and a select body of English archers, whose valour gave a momentary check to their career. Waldman no sooner observed what was passing, than he hastened to Halwyl's assistance. The Burgundians gave way: the English fell; and the fortune of the day was decided.

Meanwhile the duke of Lorraine had engaged the cavalry, and driven them from the field. Rubenberg beheld the disorder that was rapidly spreading through the enemy's entire line, and sallying from the town fell suddenly on their rear. This masterly attack completed their confusion, and their ruin.

In the general panic, many of the fugitives sought for safety by concealing themselves in the thick trees, with which the country abounded; but being subsequently discovered by the victors, they were cruelly hung upon their boughs. Hurried away by their fears, or deluded by the absurd hope of reaching the opposite shore, a body  
of



CHAP. of Italian horse threw themselves into the  
XX.  
lake, and perished almost to a man\*.—

During the dreadful carnage that ensued, the Swiss animated each other to acts of ferocity, by the cry of "Granson, Granson! Revenge, and Granson!"

With a degree of anguish almost approaching to phrensy, the duke contemplated the desolation by which he was surrounded, and for some time seemed doubtful what course to pursue. At length the love of life prevailed and turning away from the scene of misery, he galloped toward Lausanne. For some distance, he was followed by a troop of cavalry; till the commander, recollecting that the troops under Romont was still unbroken, deemed it prudent to stop the pursuit. This precaution, however, was rendered unnecessary by the dastardly behaviour of that chieftain, who no sooner witnessed his master's defeat, than he abandoned his camp with precipitation,

\* A few years ago, some fishermen found several suits of armour of exquisite workmanship in the lake, at a little distance from the town of Morat. Watteville, Hist. de la Confédération Helvétique. I. vi.

leaving

leaving his baggage and artillery a prey to the victors\*.

CHAP.  
XX.

Estimated with reference to Charles' previous loss, the booty was far more considerable than could have been expected. Immediately after the battle it was conveyed to Lucerne, to be divided among the captors in equal shares; with the exception of the furniture of the ducal pavilion, which was presented to the duke of Lorraine†.

According to most of the Swiss historians, the slaughter of the Burgundians was prodigious. Twenty-two thousand and sixty-five bodies‡ are said to have been buried in the vicinity of Morat, of which two

\* Mallet, II. 209.

† According to May, the Burgundian treasure was afterward sold by public auction, the senate of Berne having first taken their allotted portion, which they chose to receive in it's natural state. III. xxix.

‡ Mallet reduces the number to fifteen, and Comines to eighteen thousand. Yet both these calculations may be erroneous, as in a letter written immediately after the battle, the loss is computed at only 10,000. This letter is mentioned by Mallet, ib.

hundred

CHAP. <sup>XX</sup> hundred and fifty only were Swiss. Their bones were subsequently deposited near the spot where they perished, in a chapel erected to commemorate this important victory\*.

Elated with success the Swiss were preparing to retire with their well-earned spoil, when it was proposed by the Bernese commanders to punish the duplicity of the house of Savoy, by an irruption into

\* The following modest inscription, which was placed on the front of the edifice, has continued till lately a memorable trophy of Helvetic valour :

DEO. OPT. MAX.

CAROLI INCLYTI ET FORTISSIMI DUCIS.

BURGUNDIÆ.

EXERCITUS. MURATUM OBSIDENS AB HELVETIIS  
CÆSUS.

HOC SUI MONUMENTUM RELIQUIT.

This chapel perished in the general wreck of Helvetic freedom. The loss is sincerely to be regretted, as it conveyed a valuable lesson to mankind, illustrative of the fate and the folly of ambition. Had it been overthrown by the pride of triumphant despotism, our sorrow would have been unmingled with surprise ; but it was destroyed by the wanton fury of men, who called themselves the friends of liberty, and whose conduct upon this occasion exhibits to the world an additional proof, how little their practice corresponded with their theory.

the

the Pais de Vaud. Twelve thousand warriors instantly volunteered for the intended expedition. Without experiencing the smallest resistance, they advanced to Lausanne; and Geneva herself, the proud and the opulent, owed her safety to the friendly intercession of Lewis.

CHAP.  
XX.

It is now time to turn our thoughts toward the unfortunate duke. On the day after the battle he stopped at Morges, took some refreshment in haste, and remounting his horse pursued his journey to Gex, where he was entertained during three days by the duchess of Savoy. But calamity had augmented the natural jealousy of his temper into absolute disease. Notwithstanding so many proofs of long and disinterested attachment, Jolanda was the sister of his foe, was a woman, and might be a false one. He withdrew therefore in secret from her hospitable roof to the castle of Riviere, in Franche Comté, where he shut himself up for several weeks from all communication with mankind. His whole frame underwent a violent revolution. To  
the

**CHAP.** the feverish heat of passion succeeded a <sup>XX.</sup> low and feeble pulse, which his physicians thought it necessary to treat with the strongest cordials. Alleging the pressure of business (which, however, occupied little of his time) as a plea for his seclusion, he permitted scarcely any of his attendants to enter his apartment.

In a more tranquil moment, the archbishop of Vienna prevailed upon him to cut his beard, which was grown to an enormous length, and to pay the necessary attentions to the decorum of dress and personal cleanliness \*. By these alternations of feeling his life was endangered; but the natural strength of his constitution ultimately prevailed, and he again appeared in public, to make preparations for another campaign! With loquacious grief he harangued his soldiers, upbraiding them with disaffection and cowardice; and accusing all the powers of heaven and earth of having combined together for his destruction.

At length by repeated messages and ex-

\* Comines, V. v.

hortations

hortations the states of Burgundy were re-  
luctantly induced to permit a levy of three  
thousand men, and promised to provide the  
necessary funds for their equipment. These  
exertions, however burthensome, were to-  
tally inadequate to the expectations of one  
who regarded the lives and fortunes of sub-  
jects as the mere implements of a sove-  
reign's ambition. By turns he implored  
and threatened; at one moment painted  
the exigencies of his situation in the most  
affecting language, and the next burst into  
a torrent of rage; swearing, that unless they  
immediately furnished him with ample  
means of recovering his lost reputation, he  
would retire to his Flemish subjects, upon  
whose affection and fidelity he could surely  
depend.

To such a degree did his jealousy ope-  
rate, that he even caused Jolanda to be car-  
ried off by force, and confined in the castle  
of Dijon. By the connivance of her guards  
however she soon found means to escape,  
and fled to Tours, where she was received  
by Lewis with fraternal kindness, though  
not

CHAP.  
XX.

CHAP. not without some sarcastic references to  
 XX. her past behaviour\*.

This reconciliation was followed by a peace between the house of Savoy and the Helvetic cantons; Lewis having prevailed upon the Swiss with considerable difficulty to suspend their operations, till the subjects in dispute could be finally settled in a general congress, at which, he promised to act the part of mediator†. A diet accordingly assembled at Friburg, and was attended by ambassadors from many of the adjacent states. The duke of Lorraine appeared in person, hoping by his presence to encourage his allies to a vigorous prosecution of the war. Every principle of policy, he warmly contended, forbade them to sheath the sword, till they had reduced the Burgundian power within such limits, that it could be no longer an object of terror.

\* Lewis, on her arrival, addressed her in the following words; *Madame de BOURGOGNE, vous etes la bien venue.* Comines, V. iv.

† Mallet, II. 212.

This

This project, at first received with indifference, was so powerfully seconded by the ambassador of France, (who was directed to spare neither flattery nor gold upon the occasion,) that the diet consented to the duke's proposal of enrolling troops, though they positively refused to become principals in the war. CHAP. XX.

The misunderstanding with the house of Savoy became next an object of discussion; and after surmounting many obstacles, peace was at length concluded on terms not less honourable than advantageous to the confederates\*.

Another important benefit resulted from this treaty, though it was not carried into effect until the following year†; and this

\* The conditions were these: That the city of Geneva should immediately discharge the debt of 24,000 florins which had been contracted under the title of *ransom*; that the Helvetic league should retain possession of the Pais de Vaud, till they received the sum of 50,000 florins, exclusively of 35,000 due to the republic of Berne; and finally, that the towns of Morat, Cerlier, Bex; and Gran-son should be ceded in perpetuity to Berne and Friburg. Mallet, II. 213.

† 1477.

VOL. III.

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was



CHAP. was the absolute renunciation, on the part  
 XX.  
 of Savoy, of all feudal claims which she had hitherto enjoyed in the canton of Friburg. The concession was made in conformity to the wishes of Berne.

Meanwhile the duke of Lorraine pressed his levies with so much activity, that he was not only able to take the field, but had actually regained possession of his former capital, before Charles was in a situation to oppose him.

On receiving the melancholy tidings of the loss of a place, which he had so lately captured, the duke of Burgundy put himself at the head of his little army, and declaring with a tremendous oath that he would either re-conquer Nancy, or perish under it's walls, hurried on his preparations with so much vigor, that he appeared before the gates a few days after it had surrendered\*.

René however had availed himself of the important interval to replenish the public magazines, so that the city was now in a

\* Mallet, II. 214.

situation

situation to stand a siege. On the ap-<sup>CHAP.</sup>  
proach therefore of the Burgundian army <sup>XX.</sup>  
he drew off his forces, and having entrusted  
the defence to an officer of experience, re-  
turned to Switzerland, to solicit additional  
reinforcements.

Notwithstanding the inclemency of the  
season, and the exhortations of his most ex-  
perienced generals, (who advised him to go  
into winter-quarters) Charles, influenced by  
the perfidious councils of a man, whose  
profession and country ought equally to  
have inspired distrust, resolved immedi-  
ately to commence the siege.

Campobasso, an Italian *Condottiere* hav-  
ing been banished from Naples on account  
of his turbulent and intriguing spirit, had  
assembled a body of cavalry with which  
he served in the Burgundian army. By  
his assiduities and flattery he gained an  
absolute ascendancy over the mind of his  
too credulous master, which he abused to  
the basest purposes. At the same moment  
he is said, to have carried on a clandestine  
correspondence with the duke of Lorraine,  
and with the king of France; proposing

to the former to protract the siege of Nancy to any length, which the exigency of his affairs might require; while he promised the latter to poison Charles for a specific reward\*.

René found many difficulties to encounter in the course of his negotiation with the Swiss, but by address and perseverance he overcame them all. Of the generous and humane he interested the sympathy, by exhibiting the affecting picture of fallen greatness; while by promises of remuneration he silenced the scruples of the covetous, and secured their venal support: ex-

\* This anecdote is related upon the authority of Commines, who informs us that Campobasso required from Lewis, as the recompense of his treachery, to be continued in the command of his own troops with the same appointments which he enjoyed in the Burgundian army, and to receive besides a gratuity of two thousand crowns. He further adds, that the king was so much shocked at the ingratitude of the perfidious Italian, that he sent immediate information to Charles. Yet such was the infatuation of that unfortunate prince, that upon receiving the intelligence he lightly observed to his attendants, "it was impossible there could be the smallest foundation for the charge, as Lewis would never have divulged it, if it had been true." V. vi.

torting

torting from compassion and avarice that aid which ought to have been liberally granted from considerations of policy alone†.

CHAP.  
XX.

Before the end of the year, the duke of Lorraine found himself at the head of twenty thousand men, twelve thousand of whom were Swiss. Lewis also, with his wonted duplicity, not only allowed his subjects to serve as volunteers against the duke of Burgundy, but actually assembled a considerable army on the frontiers, by which Charles was kept in continual alarm.

In the beginning of January René put his forces in motion, and advancing toward Nancy by hasty marches, got possession of the bridge at St. Nicholas, which Charles with unpardonable negligence had left unguarded. Pushing forward with the greatest rapidity, he next day appeared in sight of

1477.

† Lewis (it is said) who was perfectly acquainted with the characteristic failing of the Swiss, furnished René with large sums of money, that he might more easily accomplish his purpose. Mallet, II. 216.

T S

the

CHAP. the enemy, and drew up his troops in order  
 XX. of battle.

In contradiction to his usual system, of trusting implicitly to the resources of his own mind, Charles now called a council of war; but although he condescended to solicit their opinion, he did not so far deviate from his natural character, as to submit to be guided by it. It was the unanimous advice of his ablest officers to raise the siege, and on no account to hazard a battle. In support of these suggestions, they urged the wretched state of René's finances, and the mercenary spirit of his troops; while their own situation they affirmed, was in a progressive state of improvement: whence no doubt could be ascertained that, on the return of spring, they would once more be enabled to face the foe with the fairest prospect of success.

Comines asserts, on the authority of persons who attended the duke in every vicissitude of fortune, that the whole of his force did not exceed four thousand men. May, on the contrary, makes it amount to forty  
 2 thousand ;

thousand; and estimates their loss at little CHAP.  
less, than that which they sustained at XX.  
Morat.\* Between such opposite state-  
ments, it is difficult to form a satisfactory  
opinion. Yet notwithstanding our defer-  
ence for the authority of the latter, who  
usually investigates his subject with minute  
attention, it is scarcely possible to imagine  
than any Burgundian officer would have  
ventured to propose a defensive system to  
a prince so jealous of honour, had his forces  
been superior to those of the enemy. Be-  
sides, the greater part of the Swiss histo-  
rians agree in speaking of the hostile army,  
as totally inadequate to the enterprise, in  
which they were engaged. It is certain,  
indeed, that the soldiers (whatever were  
their numbers) were so much debilitated  
by the hardships which they had endured,  
as to be totally unfit for service.

In addition also to Charles' other mis-  
fortunes, the perfidious Campobasso with  
his company of three hundred horse, went  
over to the enemy. But upon entering the

\* Mallet, IV. ii.

CHAP. Helvetic camp, he received an immediate  
order to depart. This injunction was accompanied with the humiliating remark, "that they deemed it inconsistent with the honour of a soldier, to hold the smallest communication with a traitor\*."

Disappointed at a reception so different from his expectations, the treacherous Italians retired to Condé, where he determined to wait the issue of the battle, with the hope (in the event of the Burgundian defeat) of still obtaining a share in the spoil.

Charles was no sooner informed that the enemy were in motion, than impelled by his destiny he quitted his camp, and advanced to meet them; taking post in a hollow way, where his front was covered by a rapid stream, and by strong inclosures.—The Swiss, who insisted on the station of honour, led the attack in the face of the enemy's artillery, and rushing forward with irresistible fury, fell on their flanks. The duke heard the bugle-horn with dismay; for it recalled to his troubled recollection

\* Mallet, II. 217.

the

the slaughter of Morat. But the impres-  
 sion, which it made upon his disheartened  
 troops, was still more fatal. Exhausted by  
 fatigue, and benumbed with cold, they  
 threw down their arms, and fled with pre-  
 cipitation to the neighbouring woods. Al-  
 most frantic at the sight, Charles ordered  
 the cavalry to pursue them, and drive them  
 back with their swords. The panic, how-  
 ever, was too general to be counteracted;  
 and the confusion was still farther increased  
 by a sally from the garrison of Nancy, who  
 penetrated with little opposition to the Bur-  
 gundian camp. The duke's situation was  
 hopeless. Campobasso intercepted his re-  
 treat, and his scattered troops were cut in  
 pieces before his eyes\*.

Convinced that no remedy was left, he  
 embraced the resolution not to survive his  
 defeat. With a small troop of horse, there-  
 fore, he rushed into the midst of the enemy,  
 where he fought most heroically, slaying  
 numbers with his own sword. Till deserted  
 by the greater part of his followers, he

\* Mallet, II. 218.

gave



CHAP. gave way to the instinctive love of life, and  
XX. turning from the victorious foe fled toward  
Metz.

The circumstances of his death are thus related by May\*. Before he quitted the field, he had received two wounds from a spear; his horse also was wounded, and exhausted through loss of blood fell under him in a swamp, which he was attempting to cross. Before he could extricate himself, he was overtaken by his pursuers. He immediately announced himself as the duke of Burgundy. But the commander of the hostile troop, through deafness mistaking what he said, with a barbarity unworthy of the brave, cleft his head asunder as he lay defenceless on the ground, with a battle-axe. On the following day the body was found naked, and disfigured with dirt and blood, and being conveyed to Nancy was there interred with every solemnity due to exalted station†.

This

\* Ib. id.

† At the gates it was met by the duke of Lorraine in deep mourning. Approaching the corpse he sprinkled it

This perished Charles duke of Burgun-  
 dy, who for his temerity, received from his  
 contemporaries the surname of BOLD. His  
 melancholy fate might teach mankind the  
 folly of ambition, were it possible to eradi-  
 cate a passion so deeply planted in the  
 human heart. By the loss of three suc-  
 cessive battles, he was not only deprived  
 of life, and of what he held much dearer  
 than life, reputation ; but likewise plunged  
 his country into such an abyss of misery,  
 that it never recovered it's rank as an in-  
 dependent state\*.

it with holy water, and falling on his knees devoutly ejacu-  
 lated, " May heaven have mercy on thy soul ! for thou  
 do'st need it greatly." Meister.

\* The number of prisoners, taken at the battle of  
 Nancy, appears to have been considerable ; and among  
 them we find several persons of high distinction. Most  
 of these were consigned, by the duke of Lorraine to his  
 German allies, as a compensation for their mercenary  
 service. Among others, a count of Nassau was delivered  
 into the hands of the bishop of Strasburg, by whom he  
 was detained in rigorous captivity, till he consented to pur-  
 chase liberty at an enormous price. (May, ib.)

CHAP-

## CHAPTER XXI.

*Conduct of the King of France, upon the Duke of Burgundy's Death—Distress of the Princess Mary—Affairs of Italy—Lewis reconciled to the Swiss—His Death, and Character.*

CHAP.  
XXI.

**T**HE reputation of the Helvetic arms was greatly augmented by the destruction of a prince, before whom all Europe had trembled; but the advantages resulting from their success were by no means such as to afford to the conquerors more solid grounds of happiness. They had escaped from great and imminent danger, and they had established their independence. To say that liberty may be purchased too dearly, would be to promulgate a doctrine at all times dangerous, but more particularly so at a period, when the

the crimes and follies of pretended patriotism have supplied her enemies with so fair a theme for the display of their slavish eloquence. Yet she is purchased too dearly when her price is the sacrifice of virtue. The Helvetic character is about to undergo a melancholy change, and we shall no longer trace, among the offspring of Tell and of Staufacher, those qualities which immortalise the names of their illustrious progenitors.

It has ever been a favourite subject with the moralist to declaim against the corruption of the present times, and to hold up the virtues of his ruder ancestors, as objects of unqualified admiration. That every period of our history exhibits its characteristic excellences and defects, is an assertion founded upon the experience of ages. We have heard much of the innocence of man in a state of nature; and the portrait, when coloured by the fascinating pencil of Rousseau, possesses a thousand attractions. But the bold inferences, deduced by that eccentric writer with respect to human happiness, are completely fallacious.

CHAP.  
XXI.

CHAP. cious. It is not in savage life, that we  
XXI. must seek perfection.

Is there a man of unbiassed judgment and sound understanding, who with the privilege of unbounded option would not have chosen for his residence Athens, under the splendid administration of Pericles, rather than republican and brutalised Sparta? In a genuine patriot, if such a one were then to be found, the court of Augustus must frequently have awakened the indignant glow of insulted virtue. But still the attic suppers of Mæcenas had powerful attractions for minds capable of preferring the gratifications of intellect to those of sensuality. Nor would it have been easy, while sipping the Falernian bowl in the society of Virgil and Horace, to wish for the return of those unlettered warriors, who despised all the comforts of refined life, as below the dignity of a Roman citizen. Extending the same train of reasoning to modern Europe, from the example of Britain we might draw a glorious testimony, that the most elegant taste is by no means incompatible with heroic fortitude,

titude, or with the purest spirit of patriotic feeling.

CHAP.  
XXI.

To the Swiss, however, these remarks would ill apply. Their national character, like the mountains which they inhabit, was never intended for the frittering hand of refinement. The austerity of virtue is it's appropriate dress; and habits of luxury would be ludicrously incompatible with it's native roughness.

The death of Charles gave a sudden change to the political system of Europe. With it's unfortunate master, the power of Burgundy expired. A distracted government, and a female succession, opened a wide field for the crooked politics of Lewis XI. Upon receiving intelligence of his rival's fall, that crafty tyrant, in spite of his habitual dissimulation, unable to conceal his joy, gave vent to his feelings in expressions, equally impolitic and ungenerous, of diabolical triumph\*.

After

\* Comines informs us, that he was the first person who carried the news to the king, and that he received  
two

CHAP. After his first emotions of transport had  
 XXI. subsided, he began seriously to deliberate upon his future conduct. The duke of Burgundy having left no son, the princess Mary of course inherited his extensive dominions, those parts alone excepted, which on the principles of the feudal constitution reverted to the crown of France, in default of male heirs. Determined to avail himself of this plea, in order to dismember the Burgundian power, Lewis dispatched Philip de Comines, accompanied by other confidential agents, with directions to summon the frontier towns of Picardy and Burgundy to do homage to him, as their liege lord; exhorting them to leave no means untried, which might tend to seduce the subjects of Mary from their new allegiance.

Unable singly to resist his power, and terrified at the prospect of a war, the states of Franche Comté sent deputies to the

two hundred marks of silver, in return for the welcome intelligence. Lewis (he adds) was so transported with joy, that he scarcely knew how to contain himself. (V. x.)


Helvetic diet to solicit protection, and to propose an integral union with the federative republics, whose valour and independence were equally the objects of their admiration. With a view also of attaching the highest importance to the demand, they placed at the head of the mission the archbishop of Besançon, a prelate not less conspicuous for purity of morals, than for his unshaken attachment to the cause of freedom. Yet neither the rank and character of the ambassador, nor the advantageous offers which he made, could overcome the scruples of the Swiss. The proposed alliance was rejected; and an opportunity thus suffered to escape, the most favourable perhaps that could have occurred, of augmenting the power of Switzerland.

By some of their historians, this imprudent step is ascribed to the most laudable forbearance; but principles of moderation so rarely regulate the deliberations of democratical governments, that we feel ourselves obliged, by the laws of correct criticism, to seek for a more natural solution,



CHAP. in less pure and creditable motives. It  
XXI. was so evidently the policy of the French king to counteract the wishes of the Burgundians, that he would assuredly leave no effort unattempted to defeat the projected union. So that if we duly weigh the efficacy of money in the hands of so crafty a prince, and the character likewise of the people on whom the experiment was undoubtedly made, we cannot help imputing their conduct to the effects of corruption operating upon venality. Yet in spite of the indifference, with which their proposal was received, the petitioners far from being discouraged, persevered in their solicitations till they prevailed upon the diet, not only to conclude a peace, but also to enter into a defensive alliance; in other words, to sell their protection, in consideration of the sum of a hundred and fifty thousand florins.

It does not indeed appear, that this impolitic step was sanctioned by the unanimous vote of all the members of the federation. The enlightened policy of Berne was not insensible to the advantages which must

must necessarily have accrued from the CHAP. accession of so powerful an ally. But XXI.  their opinion was over-ruled by the democratic cantons, who insisted on the other hand, that the acquisition of a country on all sides open to invasion would expose the confederacy to continual wars. They farther contended, that it was the natural consequence of aggrandisement to create distinctions of rank and fortune, and to introduce a taste for luxury and expense totally inconsistent with the true spirit of a republican constitution.

Scarcely however was the treaty concluded, when the avarice of one party, and the poverty of the other, prevented it from taking effect. The Swiss were eager to receive the stipulated price of their friendship. The Burgundians were unable to pay it, and sued in vain for a respite. Lewis with his peculiar subtilty, could not remain an inactive spectator of the dispute. He offered to advance the sum in question, provided he were suffered to take possession of Franche Comté, without opposition: and after much hesitation

U 2

the

CHAP. the Swiss agreed to his proposal, having  
 XXI. previously stipulated for the free importation of salt\*. Yet, notwithstanding all his sagacity, the French monarch was impelled by his unconquerable jealousy of temper to commit an error, which produced an important change in the political balance of Europe.

A marriage between the dauphin and the princess Mary would have annexed to the crown of France an extent of territory, which could not have failed to establish its superiority over every other European state. But the difference of age, added to the disinclination manifested by the Flemings, toward an alliance, which might eventually destroy their remaining liberties, were obstacles not easily to be overcome. None of these difficulties however existed with respect to the count of Angoulême; if the king would have consented to the exaltation of a prince, whom he already beheld with suspicion†.

\* Mallet, II, 230.

† Robertson's Charles, I, 105, Ed. 4to.

While

While with his habitual artifice, he was CHAP.  
XXI.  
tampering with the inhabitants of the frontier towns, to effect his favourite object, the states of Flanders concluded a treaty of marriage between their young sovereign and the archduke Maximilian, the son and heir of the emperor Frederic. Previously however to the settlement of this important affair, the situation of that unfortunate princess became truly deplorable. During the invasion of Picardy by the French, she resided at Ghent, in a state of honourable captivity. Permitted to enjoy the vain parade of power, she found all her actions controlled by the caprices of a licentious mob, who never allowed her to quit the city.

No sooner did intelligence arrive of Charles' death, than the Flemings behaved as if every bond of union had been rent asunder by that disastrous event. Assembling in tumultuous groups, the inhabitants of Ghent (ever tinctured with a spirit of innovation, which is sometimes mistaken

U 3

for

CHAP. for the love of freedom) deposed their magistrates, and after a summary trial conducted several of them to the scaffold.

XXI.

Rendered enterprising by impunity, they next demanded the restitution of all their ancient privileges; a mode of expression frequently employed to wring from enfeebled royalty all that the insolence of rebellion may think fit to exact: and having now usurped every function of government, they sent delegates to the king of France, with ample powers to negotiate.

Lewis received these self-created ambassadors with the highest marks of distinction. Admitted to an audience, they opened their commission, with an affectation of remaining loyalty in Mary's name; upon which he immediately stopped them short, assuring them that "they were grossly mistaken, if they imagined themselves to be acting with her approbation. For that she was then actually carrying on a secret correspondence with him, the object of which was diametrically opposite to the ostensible purpose of their mission." In confirmation of this assertion, he

he produced a letter under her own hand, written in the confidence of unsuspecting youth. CHAP. XXI.

Were it possible to deepen the sentiments of execration, which every generous soul must experience at the bare mention of the name of Lewis XI., this action alone would stamp his character with pre-eminent infamy\*.

Highly

\* Detestable as it is in every form, tyranny never appears so disgusting, as when it assumes the mask of hypocrisy. The frantic fury of a Nero, a Caligula, or a Domitian must in some measure be ascribed to mental derangement. Their actions, regulated by no certain rule, fluctuated under the capricious influence of passion, operating upon minds rendered delirious by uncontrollable power and unrestrained indulgence. Tiberius was a tyrant of a different cast. Cold, methodical, and reflective, his callous soul was incapable of deviating from that atrocious system, which he probably regarded as the refinement of policy. All within was dark, and cheerless. No glow of passion, for a moment, enlivened the gloomy scene. Whatever was dignified, or honourable, or virtuous, invariably attracted his persecution. For he regarded virtue as a symptom of disaffection; because it excited admiration, and formed a degrading contrast with his own abominable vices. After this great model of in-

U. 4. . . . . guilty

CHAP.  
XXI.

Highly incensed at this unexpected discovery, the delegates begged to be entrusted with the letter, in order to substantiate their sovereign's duplicity. The king, whose only wish was to widen the breach, readily complied; and the plebeian envoys, whose pride and resentment were now fully gratified, set off on their return; delighted at an event, which afforded them the unmanly pleasure of adding another thorn to the pillow of royalty.

That they might spare her no pang, which it was in their power to inflict, they appeared before the princess with an assumed air of respect; expatiating on the numerous difficulties with which they had

quity, Lewis XI. of France, and Philip II. of Spain, appear to have shaped their nefarious course. In no moment, or situation, were their bosoms accessible to the elevated sentiments of genius, or the tender emotions of humanity. From their ivory studies, they were despots; and decreed designed by providence to shew, that there exists no monster half so odious as man, when divested of all the sympathies of his nature, he consecrates his thoughts and faculties to the low pursuits of interest, or the gloomy visions of superstition!

contended,

contended, in persuading Lewis that they were acting in conformity to her instructions; as he insisted, that he had proofs to the contrary under her own hand. Surprised indeed at this unexpected charge, but convinced at the same time that no human being could be base enough to betray her secret, Mary ventured to deny the fact in the most positive terms; when, to her unspeakable confusion, the fatal writing was produced.

Having thus far succeeded in their infernal plan, the demagogues now resolved to terrify the princess into a full compliance with all their projects. Her confidential ministers, Imbercourt and Hugonet, were brought to trial before a prejudiced tribunal, composed exclusively of the avowed enemies of rank and merit. It was in vain for them to justify their conduct by the most satisfactory explanations. The voice of truth was drowned amidst the insults of faction, and the cries of a sanguinary populace for blood. Their former services forgotten, those venerable men, in spite of the tears and entreaties of their  
afflicted

CHAP.  
XXI.



CHAP. afflicted mistress were led to the scaffold.

XXI.

~ Plebian insolence turned from her supplications with disdain, or felt a savage gratification in contemplating her despair.

The rabble next proceeded to displace all those, whose experience and character laid claim to confidence, or who were capable of assisting their sovereign in her distress: and the administration of affairs was vested in a committee of ignorant mechanics, who seemed to derive no gratification from their usurped authority, in which the ungenerous contemplation of injured beauty did not constitute an essential part\*.

While Mary was thus abandoned to her destiny, various alliances were proposed to her by her friends. But according to the opinion of contemporary historians, she had long entertained a secret partiality for Maximilian, whom she had been taught by her father to consider in the light of her future husband. Nor were the wishes of her subjects, in this instance at least, at va-

\* Comines, V. xv.

riance with her own. The imperial honours of Austrian blood flattered the vanity of a people, who in spite of the efforts of the prevailing faction, still entertained the most exalted sentiments of their sovereign's merit: while the distant situation of his hereditary dominions, and the contracted state of his finances, prevented him from becoming an object of jealousy.

While discord and democracy were thus convulsing the Burgundian states, the spirit of party run high in Switzerland, and was every day productive of fresh disturbances. Complaints and accusations were brought against many of the leading men, whose past services, instead of generating gratitude, excited envy. In the more republican cantons this restless temper prevailed so extensively, as nearly to have occasioned a serious quarrel between them and the aristocratic states. At a festive meeting, held during the carnival at Zug, a company of young men, who assumed the appellation of the *Mad Society*\*, and who were proba-

\* *Thorechte*, their German name, may be so translated.

bly

CHAP. bly sufficiently heated by the Helvetic  
 XXI. grape, to deserve that title) associated for  
 the purpose of redressing grievances, and  
 correcting abuses\*.

Preceded by a ludicrous banner, they set  
 out upon this arduous undertaking, and  
 their numbers, as must ever be the case in  
 popular commotions, were continually  
 augmented by new partisans. So that in  
 a few days they amounted to several hun-  
 dreds, all internally animated by the spirit  
 of mischief, all avowedly the friends of re-  
 form.

Alarmed at these disorderly proceedings,  
 the diet sent repeated messages expressive  
 of high displeasure, and commanding the  
 insurgents to lay down their arms, and re-  
 turn peaceably to their respective homes.  
 But their envoys were treated with deri-  
 sion. Advancing to Friburg, the malecon-  
 tents were joined by such multitudes, that  
 they published their intention of marching  
 to Geneva, and levying the money which

\* Suicer, in his Annals, speaks of them in the following  
 terms; *Rogati quid agerent? Se stultitiæ studere, re-  
 spondebant.* Mallet, II. 228.

was

was due by treaty. Great was the consternation occasioned by this unexpected resolution, as the city was by no means in a posture of defence. Confidential agents were therefore despatched, to endeavour by every reasonable concession to avert the storm. And so successfully did they fulfil the object of their mission, that the rabble were at length induced to suspend their operations, and to accept a pecuniary gratuity in recompence of the fatigue which they had incurred by their exertions for the general good\*.

CHAP.  
XXI.

Meanwhile the prince of Orange, to whose influence and services Lewis had been principally indebted for his recent success, scrupled not to accuse him of the basest ingratitude and of the most flagrant breach of faith. Neither did he confine himself to the language of hostility, but abandoning the interests of France, and going over to Maximilian, he gave a sudden change to the balance of power. And as

\* Two florins a man were distributed among the troops, and hostages were given for the punctual payment of all arrears. Mallet. II. 229.

CHAP. a counterpoise to this heavy loss, Lewis  
XXI. deemed it expedient to have recourse to  
the Swiss, whom he had lately offended by  
his conduct.

The situation of the cantons was now highly flattering, as their alliance was courted by every power, to whom the possession of Franche Comté had become an object of ambition. Maximilian and the princess Mary sent ambassadors to their diet, in order if possible to counteract the influence of French intrigue. But this was so sagaciously employed, that their arguments failed to produce any effect. All former complaints were buried in oblivion, and a good understanding was once more established between Lewis and the Swiss\*.

Notwithstanding the recent treaty with France, and in direct contradiction to a public decree, great numbers of Swiss still continued to serve in the Austrian army. This, however, is by no means a solitary instance. The annals of Helvetia afford innumerable proofs of the inefficacy of all

\* Mallet, II. 234:

prohibitory

prohibitory laws, when both magistrates and people find it their interest to transgress them.

CHAP.  
XXI.

From soldiers, animated by no nobler motive than the love of plunder, little essential benefit could arise. Insubordination and licentiousness were the necessary consequences of such a system; and in the fate of Dole, we behold a melancholy proof of the calamities occasioned by mercenary troops. Both the garrison and the besieging army, abounded with Swiss. After having fought together for some time, without gaining any thing but blows, they grew weary of the unprofitable trade; and uniting their hitherto hostile bands, made a joint attack upon the town, which they plundered and set on fire\*.

So atrocious an act could not have failed to demand the most exemplary punishment from every government. But it was particularly calculated to excite the indignation of a people, among whom foreign service was a regular object of traffic. The

\* Comines.

cantons

CHAP. cantons recalled their troops, and having  
XXI. instituted a rigorous inquiry into the transactions, punished the most culpable of the offenders with death.

In the course of this investigation, a suspicion of criminality seemed strongly to attach to the king of France, to which his known disregard for every moral duty, gave additional probability. It was accordingly resolved to send delegates to Paris, to remonstrate with him upon the pernicious consequences of a system, which tended directly to destroy the radical principle of universal society. They were farther instructed to use their utmost endeavours to effect a reconciliation between Lewis and the Burgundian states. Bubenbergh, Waldman, and Imhoff, men of high reputation for political sagacity, and endeared to their country by many important services, were chosen for this important mission. But their present reception at the French court was widely different from that, which they had formerly experienced. Excuses the most frivolous were invented, for the purpose of delaying an explanation, while  
the

the armies of France continued to advance in an uninterrupted career of victory. After patiently enduring the neglect of the monarch, and the ridicule of his minions, Bubenberg was at length compelled to quit Paris, without having once obtained an audience\*.

There was a time, when an insult like this would have stung the pride of Helvetia, and roused her indignant sons to arms; but her spirit was no longer sensible to affronts. The love of gold had so far subdued every other feeling, that she tamely endured the yoke of lucrative submission. Instead of resenting the indignities, to which their representative had been exposed, the senate of Berne was base enough to apologise for his abrupt departure; assuring the king, that it did not proceed from offended pride, or a diminished sense of his kindness, but from the personal infirmities of Bubenberg.

Meanwhile the French succeeded in nearly every enterprise, and had already

\* Comines.



CHAP reduced the most important places in  
 XXI. Franche Comté. Tempted by the liberality  
 of Lewis, who was equally profuse in his  
 promises and in his gifts, when it appeared  
 expedient to assume the mask of generosity,  
 so many of the nobility forsook the cause  
 of freedom, that the party of Maximilian  
 evidently declined. The German merce-  
 naries, every day more dissatisfied with  
 the irregularity of their pay, deserted  
 his standard in numerous bodies. Nor  
 could the heroic efforts of the prince of  
 Orange arrest the torrent. All his powers  
 were palsied by his want of money, and  
 the lukewarm patriotism of his adherents\*.

In this state of things, it was hardly pos-  
 sible for the Helvetic people to remain un-  
 concerned spectators of the event. Their  
 eyes were opened to the imprudence of  
 their former conduct, in refusing to accede  
 to the wishes of their unfortunate neigh-  
 bours, by which they would have secured  
 the assistance of a powerful ally; and in  
 having suffered a frontier-province to be

\* *Comiues.*

occupied by a prince, whom no ties of justice or of gratitude could restrain in his career. A diet was therefore held at Zurich, in the beginning of the following year\*.

CHAP.  
XXI.

1478.

\* And as the alarm was no longer confined to the Alpine vallies, it was attended by many foreign ambassadors, whose masters beheld the projects of Lewis with equal jealousy. The result of their deliberations was the formation of a league, the avowed object of which, was to restore the balance of European power, now materially affected by the recent acquisitions of France. The pope and the emperor were the ostensible heads of this powerful combination, but the execution of the plan seems in a great measure to have devolved upon the valour and activity of the Swiss.

Alarmed at this formidable confederacy, Lewis had recourse to his accustomed arts; in the full persuasion that, if he could again succeed in cajoling the Helvetic people, he should have little to apprehend from the penury of Austria, or the thunders of Rome.

\* Mallet, II. 237.

CHAP. XXI. His efforts, however, were for once abortive. Rejecting his proposals with disdain, the Swiss proceeded to ratify their treaty with the house of Savoy, by which they agreed to evacuate the Pais de Vaud. Thus was that fertile province restored to the dominion of its ancient master; with the exception of Mórát, Granson, and Echallens, which were ceded in perpetuity to Berne and Friburg.

Every circumstance now concurred to present to Helvetia the most flattering prospect of prosperity. It was to the cultivation of their patrimonial farms, to the establishment of useful manufactures, and to the augmentation of their external trade, that her sons ought to have consecrated all the energies of their minds; indifferent to the paltry struggles for fame and power, which convulsed the rest of Europe. But this was a sacrifice not easily to be obtained from a nation, to whom was presented speedier sources of opulence, and who found themselves courted and caressed by the greatest sovereigns. By their assistance in particular, Sixtus IV. who then filled the

the

the papal chair, conceived the hope of re-  
storing it's former splendour to the triple  
crown. But in order more fully to com-  
prehend the subject before us, it becomes  
requisite to cast a hasty glance over the  
internal situation of Italy.

CHAP.  
XXI.

No sooner was that delightful country  
emancipated from the German yoke; than  
the enthusiasm of liberty began rapidly to  
spread throughout most of the Italian  
cities. But no where did it burn with  
greater fierceness, than on the luxuriant  
banks of the Arno. It is highly probable  
indeed, that the enlightened genius of the  
Florentines might have led them to estab-  
lish a republican constitution upon wise  
and liberal principles, had they not been  
convulsed by domestic factions, and the  
turbulent spirit of innovation.

The ancient animosity, between the  
Guelphs and Ghibelines, though suspended  
for awhile amid the general transports of  
recovered freedom, broke out with aug-  
mented fury, whenever the demagogue's  
seditious eloquence inflamed the populace  
with the cry of liberty. After having pass-

CHAP ed successively through every gradation  
 XXI. of republicanism, and trembled under the  
 rod of an usurper,\* who by his courage  
 dignified his delinquency; the supreme  
 authority was ultimately vested in the  
 house of Medici.

It is a grateful task to the historian to contemplate the splendor of a family, whose influence arose from the gratitude of a people, subjugated by the noblest acts of beneficence and virtue. To a name placed by wisdom and integrity on the highest pinnacle of glory, Cosmo received from his fellow citizens the noblest addition which language can confer, in the merited title of FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY; and transmitted his authority to his son, Pietio, confirmed by every claim, which ought to give stability to power.† That son was, by his weak constitution, rendered unfit for the active duties of public life; but the recollection of the parents' virtues cast a shield around his in-

\* Castruccio Castracani.

† Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de Medici, I. 91. 8vo. ed  
 firmities

firmities, which the shafts of faction were CHAP. XXI.  
unable to pierce.

Under the joint administration of Julian and Lorenzo, the violence of party broke out with increasing fury. The house of Pazzi beheld the power of the Medici with jealous eyes. Persuaded that, by the removal of their rivals, the government would of course devolve upon themselves, they entered into a conspiracy for the assassination of the two brothers; at the head of which we find, with a mingled sentiment of indignation and astonishment, the name of the archbishop of Pisa.

After many fruitless attempts, under the mask of respectful friendship, to ensnare those illustrious youths to destruction, it was resolved, with a degree of profanation, well worthy of the court of Rome, to stab them in the cathedral, during the celebration of mass. The elevation of the host, that mystic symbol of charity and peace, was chosen as the signal for assassination. The sacred ceremony commenced. The consecrated wafer was raised. \* The peo-

\* Ib. 248.

CHAP. <sup>XXI.</sup> ple knelt in pious silence. When in an instant the church resounded with the clashing of swords, and the cry of murder ! The people flew to the protection of their favourites. Lorenzo they rescued, but Julian had already received his death-blow. In tumultuous phrenzy the populace flew to the houses of the principal conspirators, who fell instant victims to their fury.\* The Mitre itself failed to preserve it's wearer. All respect for his person was lost in the contemplation of his crimes ; and dragged from his palace by the indignant mob, he was hanged in his episcopal robes.†

Had there existed the smallest sense of decency in the court of Rome, the pope would have attempted to bury his infamy in silence. But the father of the christian world disdained concealment. With an intrepidity, unequalled in the annals of human profligacy, he proclaimed his guilt aloud. The punishment of an archbishop was a crime too vast for the reach of

\* Ib. 254.

† Ib. 255.


mercy,

mercy, as he then existed in the bosom of <sup>CHAP.</sup> the delegate of heaven. To the church <sup>XXI.</sup> alone it belonged to chastise her guilty sons. However heinous the offence, the sacred character of the priesthood exempted it from the jurisdiction of secular tribunals. Such was the language maintained by the haughty Sixtus, and to his atrocious theory his conduct was in every respect conformable. Excommunications and interdicts were hurled against the citizens of Florence, and a reparation was demanded, not less signal than the transgression.\* Convinced that murder is equally a crime in all ranks of men, and that the holy functions of religion served only to exaggerate its atrocity, the Florentines refused to obey. But perceiving that in the papal codes innocence afforded no exemption from punishment, they applied to the French king for protection, and at length prevailed upon him to undertake their defence. Unable to contend against the power of France, the pope made a merit of necessity, and

\* Ib. 279.

after




CHAP. after having compelled their ambassadors  
XXI.  to undergo the most humiliating penance, as the price of their absolution, condescended to receive the Tuscans into his apostolical favour.\*

The rest of Italy was a prey to domestic dissensions, in which the Transalpine princes took little part, though they afforded an ample field for the operations of artifice and intrigue. But as the temporal resources of the triple crown were totally inadequate to the accomplishment of his extensive projects, Sixtus determined, if possible, to engage the Swiss in his interests. To avarice he held out the plunder of the contumacious as an allurement, while the treasures of paradise were profusely offered as incentives to credulity and superstition. A legate also was secretly commissioned to propose the most advantageous conditions to the Helvetic government, provided they would undertake the meritorious office of becoming the champions of the christian church. As a farther bribe,

\* Ib. 311.

the

the holy father sent a consecrated banner CHAP. XXI.  
to the federative republics, representing   
St. Peter seated on the papal throne, and  
decorated with all the attributes of royalty.  
But valuable as this present might have  
seemed to the generality of mankind in  
the fifteenth century, it so ill suited the  
inclinations of the Swiss, and was pre-  
served with so little care, that it is no longer  
to be found. The bull, however, by which  
it was accompanied, is still in existence,  
and serves at once to ascertain the fact,  
and to illustrate the folly of the age.\*

It does not appear, that any conclusive  
arrangements took place at the diet at Lu-  
cerne, where the subject was debated in  
full assembly. Yet, though nothing satis-  
factory was determined upon, the govern-  
ment of Uri was seduced by the flattering  
promises of the legates and the advice of  
it's factious leaders, to invade the duchy  
of Milan, and thus attempt a diversion in  
favour of the pope. Under pretences the

\* Mallet, II. 241.

most

CHAP. most frivolous, a band of enterprising  
 XXI. youths were ordered to cross the St. Gothard. Having advanced without impediment to Bellinzona, they despatched messengers to all the cantons, requiring from each the succours stipulated in times of actual danger.†

Exasperated at a proceeding so repugnant to every principle of justice, the magistrates of Berne and Friburg remonstrated warmly with their co-estates, who, tempted by the prospect of an easy conquest, had already begun to arm. Finding their complaints at length productive of the desired effect, they lost no time in sending deputies with positive injunctions to the troops to suspend all farther operations. But, instead of meeting with the respect due to their situation, the delegates were received with derision and insult. The commanders denounced them as enemies to the state, who had assumed the fictitious character of representatives, in

\* Vide Mallet.

order

order to frustrate an enterprise of the highest importance to the interests of Helvetia.\*

CHAP.

XXI.

The duke of Milan now assembled a numerous army, and directed it to penetrate by the Levantine vale into the canton of Uri. The execution of this project was however attended with far greater difficulties, than he appeared to apprehend, as the enemy were already masters of the defile of Irnis,† and resolved to defend it to the last extremity. Confiding in the vast superiority of their numbers, the Italians attempted to force the passage, but were repulsed with considerable slaughter,‡ and thrown into such confusion, that they were attacked in their turn by the Swiss, and pursued for several miles.

The event of this battle inspired the victors with so much contempt for the foe, that they unanimously determined to prosecute the war. The duke of Milan, how-

\* Mallet.

† A strong pass between the mountain and the Tesino.

‡ May, IV. v.

ever,

CHAP. ever, was so much dismayed by it, that he  
XXI. resolved at all events to terminate the contest, and for that purpose requested the mediation of France. Having other objects in view, to which he was desirous of directing the energies of Helvetic valour, Lewis accepted the office with alacrity, and by his powerful interference soon effected a peace, on the accustomed basis of a pecuniary gratification, under the plausible title of indemnity.

Though marked by no striking features, this war was productive of most important consequences, and forms a memorable epoch in the annals of Switzerland. The passage to Italy was no longer shut. The character of the Italians was no longer unknown. With astonishment and with envy they heard of the treasures amassed in that favoured land of science and the arts, and longed to appropriate them. The question of right they never agitated. In the full persuasion of ultimate success, all scruples were forgotten; and they thenceforth acted, when ambition was concerned, as if they had been convinced, that by her primary law

law the riches of the earth were destined CHAP. XXI.  
by nature to the mighty.

Influenced by these motives, the Swiss were already prepared to take an active part in the Italian wars, when they were summoned thither by the pope. Nothing therefore could have proved more gratifying to their feelings, than a proposal to engage in scenes, where fortune, and fame and pleasure, were the sure attendants on victory.

Such was now the reputation of the Helvetic republics, that they attracted the notice of nations, who had before been strangers to their very name. Matthias Corvinus, the hero of the age in which he lived, heard with admiration of the exploits of a people, whose military character was so analagous to his own. Occupied in the honourable project of rescuing Europe from the Mahomedan yoke, he trembled lest jealousy of power should operate more forcibly on the interested politics of Austria, than the claims of religion. While he was contending for the glory of the christian name, Frederic might avail himself

CHAP. self of his absence to invade his hereditary  
XXI. dominions, and thus arrest him in his sacred career of conquest.

A Bernese officer, after sharing in the honour of the Burgundian war, had engaged in the Hungarian service, and by a series of gallant exploits, had attracted the favour of his prince. Matthias frequently entered into conversation with him, about the heroic deeds of his countrymen. He was no stranger to the reputation of the duke of Burgundy, had heard much of his riches and power, and felt that the nation, which had been able to resist him, and to whom the aggrandisement of Austria was not less prejudicial than to himself, was pointed out by nature for his ally. The Swiss captain was in consequence deputed, in quality of ambassador, to his native country; where he concluded a treaty, in the name of Matthias, in spite of all the intrigues and opposition of the imperial ministers.\*

\* May, *ib.*

Lewis had now completely recovered the confidence of the Swiss. For some time, indeed, they hesitated between pride and avarice; undecided whether to punish him for his neglect of their envoys by an open rupture, or to accept the bribe, which he artfully proffered as the price of reconciliation. Perceiving that the delicacy of offended honour no longer stood in his way, the French monarch determined to carry his point, by outbidding his competitors.\* The influence which he acquired by this well-timed liberality was so great, that he was not only permitted to tyrannise at pleasure over the defenceless inhabitants of Franche Comté, but was allowed by a public vote to enrol six thousand Swiss; though the latter concession was accompanied by the express condition, that they were to be employed solely for the internal defence of the kingdom, and never despatched on foreign service with-

\* The sum offered by the states of Franche Comté, was 150,000 florins; that, given by Louis, was 200,000. Mallet, II. 249.



CHAP. out the previous consent of the diet. The  
 XXI. money was immediately sent, and the  
 troops as speedily entered France; but, a  
 truce having been concluded between  
 Maximilian and Lewis, they received or-  
 ders at Chalons to return. They were, how-  
 ever, rewarded with so much liberality,\*  
 that the French interest became daily  
 more prevalent.

The ambitious projects of Lewis were now drawing towards an end. Conscious of his approaching dissolution, he turned his thoughts to a general peace, that he might leave his son and successor in the possession of a tranquil throne. Neither had Maximilian any valid grounds to protract hostilities. His consort was lately dead, and the refractory spirit of the Flemings, which had resisted the power of Charles the Bold, was still less likely to be controlled by the authority of a stranger,

\* May informs us, that the pay of the cavalry was 27 florins a month; and that of the infantry 14½. This, according to the present value of money, would be twelve pounds for a horse, and nearly seven for a foot soldier.

connected

connected with them only as the husband of their deceased princess.

CHAP.  
XXI.

Mary left an infant daughter, whom her father was compelled by his turbulent subjects to betroth to the dauphin, as the seal of eternal concord between the rival nations. This project, however, though dictated by the soundest policy, was never realised. For scarcely was the contract passed, when Lewis died; after which his son and Maximilian no longer agreed, except upon the single point of annulling every article of the treaty.

The artful policy of Lewis XI. produced such important changes in the government of France, and eventually in the situation of modern Europe, that it is a matter of curious interest to investigate the transactions of his memorable reign. To use the words of a celebrated historian, "Lewis was formed by nature to be a tyrant."\* In whatever period he had lived, it is probable that his administration would have been characterised by systematical at-

\* Robertson's Charles V. I. 97.

CHAP. tempts to increase the prerogatives of the  
XXI. crown, and to annihilate the rights of  
the people. Endowed with a deep and  
penetrating genius, he was most saga-  
cious in discerning his real interests, and  
most indefatigable in pursuing them.  
Neither difficulties, nor dangers, could  
arrest his course. To a temper, alike cun-  
ning and severe, he united the most per-  
fect disregard for the opinion of mankind;  
looking down with contempt upon every  
tie, by which ambition, when ennobled by  
a sense of honour, is of necessity restrain-  
ed. At the commencement of his reign,  
he seems to have traced out a well-digested  
plan, from which he never deviated. Cal-  
lous to the feelings of humanity, and a  
perfect stranger to the frailties of love, he  
had no earthly inducement to turn aside  
from the crooked path of deceit. With a  
jealous eye, he beheld the power of the  
great nobility, and secretly resolved to de-  
stroy those dangerous privileges, which had  
been conferred by the justice of former so-  
vereigns as the rewards of meritorious services  
or wrung from their weakness by successful  
rebellion,

rebellion. To degrade that illustrious order, was the leading object of his pursuit, and that he might accomplish it with greater facility, he selected men from the lowest stations, whom he raised to the most distinguished offices of confidence and authority. Not satisfied however with shutting out the nobles from those dignities and employments, to which exalted birth had hitherto given an exclusive title, and driving them from a court where they were no longer able to appear with appropriate splendour, he proceeded to despoil them of every prerogative, to which the enjoyment of ages had given them a kind of prescriptive claim, and reduce them to a level with his commonest subjects.\*

\* The reader is requested to observe, that it is not our intention to become the advocate of *exclusive privileges*. On the contrary, we conceive that the principle, upon which Lewis acted, was founded in wisdom; though the means which he employed were most atrocious. No constitution can be tolerable in which any order of men is superior to law. But it is surely better to tolerate a grievance, than to recur to a crime for its remedy.

CHAP. Such treatment was not to be endured  
XXI. by men of lofty spirits, accustomed to consider the favours of royalty as belonging of right to themselves. In repulsion of the indignity, they took up arms. This was precisely what the despot wished, as it opened an ample field for confiscation and torture. Persons of the most illustrious descent were now brought before tribunals, from whose jurisdiction rank had been hitherto exempt, and were condemned to punishments of the most cruel and ignominious description.

Thus the people who had been accustomed to contemplate their feudal lords with veneration and awe, were led gradually to feel an abated respect, when they beheld the noblest blood of the land flowing beneath the axe of the executioner, and saw the first personages in the kingdom immured in dungeons, or exposed in iron cages to public derision.

The king was too well acquainted with the haughty spirit of his victims, to imagine that they would bear with patience such a reverse of fortune. A general combination

bination might have proved fatal to his projects; but he had nothing to dread from their insulated opposition. It was therefore his constant study, by insinuations and artifices, to keep alive the ancient animosities, which had long divided the feudal nobility, and which were indeed the necessary consequences of that barbarous system; and in the conduct of this insidious undertaking, he displayed that unqualified contempt of truth and honour, which has rendered his name proverbially odious to posterity.

He appears to have been the first among the European sovereigns, who understood the real value of foreign mercenaries, and who knew, that no engine is so efficacious in the hands of despotism as a standing army. The increasing expences of a government, conducted upon such a plan, required funds more abundant for its support, than the ordinary revenues of France could supply. But the example of his father afforded a precedent, which he had too much penetration to neglect, and taught him the means of raising money by

Y 4

virtue

CHAP. virtue of the royal prerogative without  
XXI. consulting the states, whose concurrence till then had been regarded as essential to the establishment of every fresh imposition. He was too sensible of the importance of such a privilege, not to carry it to it's fullest extent. But he was at the same time aware that, in similar cases, authority is the last instrument, to which a prudent prince will resort; and he unfortunately discovered that there are other methods of governing popular assemblies, more easy and quiet, though not less efficacious, than those of compulsion.

Were there no other cause for execration attached to the memory of Louis XI. he would merit the detestation of every virtuous mind, for having first introduced that deep-laid scheme of corruption, which has since been carried to such fatal extremities. The prince or minister, who invades the rights of the subject by open violence, excites by the avowal of his design a spirit of indignation, which frequently overwhelms him in it's consequences. But he, who contaminates the  
source

source whence freedom ought to flow (an attempt not less cowardly, than criminal) too generally eludes observation by artifice, or escapes punishment from venality.

While Lewis was thus consolidating the power of the crown, he in an almost equal degree extended it's territories. By his various acquisitions, France became a compact and united kingdom. No longer exposed to the turbulence of faction; it was reduced under an uniform system, as coercive and sanguinary as any that despotism ever exercised for the misery of mankind.

Previously to his reign, the general balance of power was little understood. Even the most enlightened princes, satisfied with providing for the internal security of their own dominions, beheld with indifference the operations of other nations, so long as they were not decidedly hostile to themselves. But Lewis watched the motions of all his neighbours with unwearied attention. In most of the European courts, he maintained accredited spies, who under the ambiguous mask of diplomacy were

6 incessantly



CHAP. incessantly occupied in exciting troubles,  
XXI.

or in purchasing support. Either as a principal, or an auxiliary, he took an active share in every important transaction of his time. Till then, politics had never been regarded as a science. By him they were not only reduced to certain principles, but shaped and fashioned into that tortuous system, which constitutes the modern art of negociation. His decisions were prompt, his measures vigorous and conclusive. Such also was the order, which he established in every branch of the administration, that all the resources of his kingdom could be called into action without difficulty or delay. In a word, according to the expression of Francis I. *il a mis les rois hors de page*.\*

\* This phrase alludes to the plan of education, which was anciently pursued by the young nobility. From the age of seven, when they were separated from their female attendants, they were employed in the service of some person of distinction as *pages*, and remained in that situation till fourteen, at which time they were raised to the rank of *squires*, when they were said to be *hors de pages*. *Memoires sur l'Ancienne Chevalerie, par M. de S. Palaye.*

The

The example of Louis XI. was too favourable to royal prerogative, to be neglected by contemporary monarchs. Henry VII. of England, and Ferdinand V. of Spain, availed themselves of the important lesson, to raise the authority of the crown on the ruins of the feudal aristocracy. From this period, a memorable change took place in the different governments of Europe, which merits equally the attention of the antiquary, the politician, and the philosopher.

Comines, who enjoyed a considerable share of the favour, and was always about the person of Lewis, has transmitted to posterity many interesting anecdotes of his domestic life. They portray the misery of a distempered conscience, and evince that the crown of despotism, however brilliant, is always encircled with thorns.

About three years before his death, he was seized with a fit, which deprived him of speech, and from which he never perfectly recovered. From that time he discovered the most puerile jealousy of power.

When

CHAP. When physically incapacitated from business by the violence of his malady, he insisted that all despatches should be laid before him with the usual ceremony, and would inspect them with simulated attention, though unable to comprehend a syllable of their contents.

XXI.

Conscious of having merited the detestation of mankind, he suffered none, except his domestics, to approach him during the latter years of his life. Shut up at Plessis du Parc, a fortified castle, he ordered his guards to employ the same precautions, as if an enemy had been actually before its walls. This suspicious temper led him frequently to change his attendants, and to select them from men of humble condition, thinking that he might repose the greatest confidence in those, whose fortune was the work of his own hands. To his physician, whom he equally feared and caressed, he was so profusely liberal, that he is said to have given him not less than fifty thousand crowns, in the course of a single year.

It

It is difficult to suppose that a man, CHAP. XXI. whose actions exhibited a continual breach of every moral duty, could believe in a future state of retribution; yet we are told that Lewis gave way to the most abject superstition, indulging with the pious stupidity of a monk in all the ceremonial minutiae of Romish worship. He was besides much addicted to judicial astrology, had an unbounded faith in the prescience of hermits and other devotees, and endeavoured to dive into futurity by the most irrational methods.

The cruelty of his disposition is proverbial.\* We are informed by Comines, that he frequently inflicted the severest

\* Voltaire accuses him of the murder of his brother, the duke of Berri, whom he caused to be poisoned in the following manner: The duke was at supper with his mistress, Madame de Montsoraui, and his confessor; when the latter produced a peach of uncommon beauty, which he divided between the lady and her lover. In a few minutes after she had swallowed it, Madame de Montsoraui expired in the greatest agonies; the prince also was seized with convulsions, but lingered for some days in the most excruciating tortures. Histoire Generale, xc.

punishments

CHAP. punishments from the single motive of  
 XXI. enjoying the exercise of authority, and  
*feeling* (as he himself expressed it) *that he was still a king*. What a depravity of heart does this sentiment evince, since power may be equally displayed in acts of beneficence!

Actuated by the same diabolical principle, he cashiered officers, disbanded troops, retrenched pensions, enriching one man and ruining another, "in order," as he said, "to be talked of in the world, and to convince his subjects that he was alive."

That a man who had lived like Lewis, should be afraid to die, we may readily conceive. Such however is the energy of the human mind, that the most atrocious criminals can sometimes assume the serenity of virtue, and march undauntedly to the scaffold. But Lewis was not gifted with nerves so impenetrable. He clung to life with a cowardice, which would have been disgraceful to female weakness, hoping by the most abject puerilities of superstition  
 to

to atone for his past enormities.\* In a word, as his life afforded a model for subsequent tyrants to follow, his death may serve to convince them, that it can never be followed with impunity.

CHAP.  
XXI.

\* Most of the anecdotes, here related concerning this prince, are given on the authority of Comines.

CHAP.

## CHAPTER XXII.

*Internal State of Switzerland---Diet at Stanz---Nicolas de la Flue---Friburg and Soleure admitted into the Helvetic League---Their Constitution and Government---Disturbances at Bâle and Zurich---Waldman beheaded---Venality of the Swiss; Fresh Commotions at St. Gal.*

CHAP.  
XXII.  
1481.

FROM the study of history, we are almost tempted to infer, that a state of warfare is natural to man, and that peace is less frequently the effect of inclination than of necessity. Exhausted by the violence of their exertions, the nations of the earth seem to lay down the sword, only that they may recover sufficient strength to take it up again with renovated vigor.

Such at least was the case with respect to Switzerland. The effects of the Burgundian war, notwithstanding it's prosperous

ous issue, were severely felt by a people, CHAP.  
XXII. whose resources were by no means adequate to the calls of ambition. In the pride of triumph, the plunder obtained at Granson appeared inexhaustible. But time and experience evinced the contrary, and proved that it's effect had been rather to corrupt the morals of the people, than to add to their domestic enjoyments.

A spirit of insubordination was rapidly spreading among the lower classes, who were encouraged by the example of the *Mad Society* to despise their too lenient governments. Neither was the conduct of the democratic cantons calculated to restore tranquillity. With envy they beheld the encreasing prosperity of the aristocratic states, accused them of unfairness in the division of the spoil, and attributed to knavery what had been the fruit of industrious and successful speculation. These unfriendly symptoms created a general alarm, and induced Berne and Friburg not only to consolidate their friendship by additional ties; but to admit Zurich, Lucerne, and Soleure in-



CHAP. to their distinct alliance. This measure,  
 XXII. the offspring of the soundest policy, was represented by the popular cantons as an infringement of the Helvetic constitution, and gave rise to repeated remonstrances. Their resentment however was particularly levelled against the government of Lucerne, which they scrupled not to accuse of the basest views; affirming that Zurich, by the prosecution of similar schemes, had occasioned the civil war. This charge, it must owned, was in some measure substantiated by facts. The transaction, so far at least as it regarded Lucerne, was undoubtedly open to reprehension. But, by the subsequent intemperance of their accusers, the current of popular opinion was eventually turned in their favour.\*

It may perhaps be necessary to remind the reader, that the alliance between the different members of the confederacy was subject to many partial restrictions, and that no system generally applicable to them all had yet been established. That both Berne and Zurich were

\* Stettler.

exercising an unquestionable prerogative, CHAP. XXII.  
their very enemies were compelled to admit. But with respect to Lucerne, the case was different, and it might reasonably be doubted, whether she acted with perfect propriety in concluding a treaty without the concurrence of the three parent cantons.

From our experience of the restless and overbearing spirit of democracy, we may readily infer, that a misunderstanding like this was calculated to produce the most serious consequences. Fortunately however for the repose of Helvetia, there existed a man in her sequestered vallies, whose piety had attracted the veneration of his countrymen, and who had merited their esteem by his benevolence.

Nicolas de la Flue was descended from an ancient family, in the canton of Unterwalden. As a soldier he had signally devoted his youth to the public service; and in more advanced life he had distinguished himself by his integrity as a magistrate. After having discharged those important duties, he put on the humble garb of a hermit, resolving to dedicate his remaining  
Z 2 days

CHAP. days to charity and devotion. But his  
XXII. mind was too enlightened to suppose, that acts of austerity are the most grateful oblations at the throne of mercy. He felt, on the contrary, that it was the paramount duty of every man to be useful to his fellow-creatures, and his whole life afforded a practical illustration of this noble truth.\*

A diet assembled at Stanz, to investigate the grounds of the dispute, and if possible to reconcile the contending parties. But so tenacious were the litigants of their pretended rights, that they refused to hear on either side of any concessions. The deputies were accordingly on the point of separating, when la Flue presented himself, like an angel of peace, in the midst of the congress. In his solitary cell, he had been informed of the dangers which menaced Helvetia. It was a subject, that called for exertion; and never was the spirit of philanthropy exerted in a more dignified cause. With trembling steps he hastened to Stanz. Upon his appearance,

\* May, IV. vi.

the

the rage of faction subsided. After pa-  
thetically expatiating on the calamities  
incidental to civil war, and endeavouring  
to revive those sentiments of patriotism  
and brotherhood, which had ensured the  
prosperity of Helvetia, the venerable her-  
mit continued, in a strain peculiarly adapt-  
ed to the passions and prejudices of his  
audience: “ Though I have been long  
“ secluded from all commerce with the  
“ world, I feel an honest pride in the glory  
“ of Helvetia. But when in the excess of  
“ presumption, she forgets those obliga-  
“ tions, which prudence and humanity  
“ impose on conquest, my cheek reddens  
“ with shame. For what can the most  
“ splendid trophies avail, when erected  
“ upon the ruins of national honour.

“ I am now standing on the very brink  
“ of the grave ; yet with a soul dead to  
“ the call of ambition, and insensible to  
“ the dictates of interest, I will dedicate  
“ my few remaining days to the service of  
“ my country and my God.”

As he proceeded in his harangue, the  
hearts of his auditors relented by degrees ;

Z 3

nor

CHAP. nor did the assembly separate till tranquil-  
 XXII. lity and concord were fully re-established.  
 Availing himself still farther of his beneficent influence, he persuaded the democratic cantons to receive Friburg and Soleure into the Helvetic confederacy. It was agreed, as a sacrifice, however, to the pride of the Schweitzers, that the objectionable league between the five cantons\* should be previously dissolved†.

The inconveniences arising from the unsettled constitution of Switzerland, had been manifested upon various occasions. From the ninth chapter, explaining the nature of the Helvetic union, with all its different bearings and relations, it clearly appeared that the forest-cantons formed a central point, where all the rays of the federation met. They were specifically, though not equally, connected with every member. Between some of the co-estates, indeed, scarcely any combination subsisted, except what was created by their mutual

\* Berne, Lucerne, Zurich, Friburg, and Soleure.

† May, IV. vii.

relation

relation to the original founders. A system, CHAP. XXII.  
so irregular, could not fail to produce delay, when any pressing emergency required promptitude of decision.

Another source of discontent arose from the mode, which had hitherto been adopted respecting the distribution of plunder. The rural cantons insisted upon adhering to the ancient practice, by which it was divided in equal portions among all the constituent states, without any regard to their population, or contingent of troops. To this partition as unfair, the municipal cantons reasonably objected.

The enormities committed by the Mad Society, which came next under consideration, gave rise to an edict, distinguished in Helvetic history by the title of the CONVENTION OF STANZ. Its object was professedly to redress all existing grievances and to restore permanent concord to the federative republics. After confirming the *Decree of Sempach*, the contracting parties engaged to abstain from all future acts of aggression, and on the event of any disturbance, to interpose their combined exertions

Z 4

CHAP. exertions in behalf of the sufferers. It was  
 XXII, farther enacted, that criminals of every  
 description should be tried and punished  
 by the magistrates of the district, where  
 the offence had been committed; but that,  
 in case of an insurrection, the united force  
 of Helvetia should be employed to re-es-  
 tablish order. With regard to the spoils  
 which might be taken from an enemy, and  
 the contributions levied on a captured city  
 or a subjugated province, it was finally de-  
 termined, that booty acquired in the field  
 should be allotted to the troops in equal  
 portions; but that whatever was received  
 under the title of contribution, or of ran-  
 som, belonged exclusively to the govern-  
 ment, and should be divided among the  
 cantons and their allies. The conquered  
 countries were to be disposed of in a si-  
 milar manner, with this single difference,  
 that the allies were excluded from any  
 share.\*

These arrangements having previously  
 taken place, Friburg and Soleure were ad-

\* Tscharnier, Stettler, and May.

mitted

mitted members of the Helvetic league; CHAP. XXII.  
upon condition that they should form no alliance, nor engage in any war, without the consent of the eight ancient cantons. To this it was subjoined as an additional stipulation, that they should observe the strictest neutrality, in the event of any dispute between the Helvetic states, and confine themselves wholly to the office of mediators: while, with respect to any differences of their own, they were bound to submit implicitly to the decision of the other cantons.\*

Although Friburg and Soleure have been repeatedly mentioned in the course of the preceding pages, yet as the reader may be unacquainted with the domestic history of the former, the following sketch will perhaps not prove unacceptable.

Friburg in the *Uchtland* (as it is called, by way of distinction from a city of the same name in the Brisgau) is situated on the river Sane, in the diocese of Lausanne. It was built by the duke of Zaringen, a

\* May, IV. ix. x.

few



CHAP. few years antecedently to the foundation  
 XXII. of Berne. The similarity of their origin, combined with other causes, occasioned an intimate union between the infant cities, which was displayed in repeated acts of reciprocal service. But as they gradually increased in wealth and vigour, their early friendship gave way to the suggestions of envy; a feeling so natural to man, that it seldom fails to agitate countries, in which the balance of power is nearly equal.

By the influence of it's founder with the reigning emperor, Berne attained to the dignity of an imperial city. While Friburg devolved to the house of Hapsburg, as heir to the dukes of Zaringen.\*

From this moment, their situation grew daily more dissimilar. Jealous of the independence, which they wanted the courage to assert, the enslaved and indigent Friburgher beheld with conscious shame the merited superiority of Berne.† Between minds, so differently attuned, no lasting harmony could possibly subsist.

\* May, III. xxi.      † Id. ib.

Yet

Yet we discover no overt acts of hostility before the year 1288, when the Fri-  
burghers served under the banners of Rodolphus, during the siege of Berne. From that period, a total separation ensued. As the vassals of Austria, the citizens of Friburg renounced their alliance with the friends of liberty, and gave their servile support to a cause, which every principle of honour and interest should have prompted them to oppose. Ten years afterward, they formed part of the army, which by it's defeat on the Donnerbuhl enhanced the reputation and the security of Berne. Reconciled by necessity, they continued friends till 1338, when the ambitious projects of the Helvetic barons were annihilated before the walls of Laupen. That memorable day left Friburg exposed to the resentment of a rival, by whom she was nearly reduced to subjection.

Convinced at length by the battle of Sempach, that the power of the confederates reposed on too solid a basis to be

\* Stumpf. VIII.

shaken

CHAP. shaken by the utmost efforts of their ene-  
XXII.

mies, and that nothing great or honourable can be achieved by slaves, they resolved to burst the fetters, which they had ingloriously worn so long, and for this purpose entered into a fresh alliance with the republic of Berne; which was no sooner concluded, than in spite of the complaints and menaces of Austria, they resumed all their ancient franchises. These were subsequently confirmed by the emperor Sigismund, in his journey through Switzerland.

During the calamitous period of the Zurich war, Friburg manifested an evident partiality toward the popular cause, and more than once afforded material assistance to the victorious cantons. But when summoned to oppose the progress of the French, her citizens excused themselves, under the pretence that the dauphin was avowedly acting as the ally of Austria, from whose authority they were never legally enfranchised. This, conduct, however justifiable by the strict rules of equity, was so repugnant to the views and pretensions of the confederate states, that it occasioned a coolness

coolness between them, which terminated at length in an open rupture \*. CHAP. XXII.

The issue of that struggle for power has been already described. The vanquished were compelled to throw themselves unconditionally at the feet of Austria. The result of this measure has been likewise exhibited. Instead of taking his repentant children to his bosom, the duke availed himself of their weakness to change the constitution, and to deprive them by his exactions of the few remaining resources, which the compassion of their conqueror had left untouched.

In this situation, the government was driven to the dangerous expedient of imposing additional burthens on their impoverished subjects. They were told indeed, in the customary language of hypocrisy, that their privations would be only of short continuance; that they were making a great and glorious effort; and sacrificing a part for the preservation of the rest. But the theory of impositions was then

\* Chap. XIX.

CHAP. so little understood, that this doctrine, instead of being received with enthusiastic transport, excited surprise and indignation. XXII. The people felt the pressure of the times; they were daily constrained to renounce some little comfort, which habit and education had rendered almost essential to existence; while the benefit to be derived from their patriotic sufferings, was at best the offspring of conjecture, secured to them only upon the promises of men, by whom they had been repeatedly deceived. Neglected agriculture, and decaying commerce, were the effects of fiscal extortion. These were sensible calamities, which no rhetoric could palliate. The peasants and manufacturers, who perceived their fortunes rapidly decline, were not easily to be persuaded, that a measure productive of so many present evils could be founded in wisdom; or that the authors of the public misery were entitled to their continued confidence and support. Accustomed to judge of men from their actions, and to attach little value to professions unsubstantiated by practical good, they began to question the

the

the skill of the pilot, who had already run the vessel ashore. Suspicions gave rise to complaints, and an inquiry was in consequence instituted, of which nothing but personal eulogy and declamatory arrogance were the result. The people now with a more menacing tone, declared their resolution of confiscating the property of the nobles, and applying it to the liquidation of the public debt, if the charge of delinquency should be confirmed\*.

While the Friburghers were thus preparing an exemplary punishment for those, who had plunged their country into a calamitous war, the duke of Austria was not less dissatisfied with the magistrates for having concluded a peace without his authority. Nor was he backward in manifesting his displeasure. Proportioning his resentment to the fortunes, rather than to the transgressions of the guilty, he imposed enormous fines upon the rich; while poverty was condemned to expiate her offence in a solitary dungeon†.

\* D'Alt. IV. 158.

† May, III. xxi.

Such

CHAP.  
XXII.

Such was the situation of this devoted city, when Thuring de Halwyl (whom Albert, in his wrath, appointed governor) commenced his rigorous administration. To escape his severities, many citizens of note sought an asylum under a milder government. But the peasantry, attached by stronger prejudices to their native soil, prepared in secret to assert their privileges by arms.

Satisfied that no real benefit could accrue from the possession of an exhausted and desperate province, the duke of Austria embraced the ungenerous design of abandoning Friburg in it's distress. Under pretence that it was his master's intention to pay that city a visit, Halwyl made the most splendid preparations for his reception, borrowing from the wealthy their plate and jewels, and whatever else had escaped his previous rapacity. The day was fixed for Albert's arrival; and the governor, attended by the principal inhabitants, rode out to meet him. Before they had proceeded far, they fell in with a troop of Austrian cavalry. Halwyl joined them,


and bowing to his companions, took leave CHAP.  
 of them in these words: "Acquainted with XXII.  
 " your inclination to join the Helvetic  
 " league, the duke no longer opposes your  
 " wishes. From this moment he declares  
 " you free; and in return for the favour,  
 " condescends to receive the plate and jew-  
 " els, which you have commissioned me  
 " to offer to his acceptance\*."

Having thus spoken, he galloped off with a smile of derision; leaving the astonished citizens in the full enjoyment of liberty, which (as he had secretly conveyed away all their valuable effects) was literally their only remaining treasure.

So little however were they accustomed to act for themselves, that instead of providing for their future security, they sunk into despondency. Menaced on all sides by Berne and Savoy, they felt themselves unequal to the arduous conflict, and solicited protection from the imperial throne. But to act decisively, was incompatible with Frederic's natural indolence; and he accord-

\* Id. ib.



CHAP. ingly received their application with such  
 XXII.  marked indifference, that the disappointed delegates at once renounced every hope of assistance\*.

In this state of dereliction, the magistrates had recourse to Savoy. To this measure they were impelled by the strongest motives, as they had learned from unquestionable authority, that notwithstanding his pretended renunciation, Albert was actually on the point of selling to Philibert his abandoned claims†. Having secured a powerful protector, their next endeavour was to establish peace, which was at length affected by a renewal of their ancient alliance with Berne on terms of mutual utility.

With the conduct of Friburg, during the Burgundian war, the reader is already acquainted. Little, therefore, remains to be mentioned, except it's incorporation into the Helvetic confederacy.

No sooner were the ambitious projects of Charles, and the consequent expectations of Jolanda, completely frustrated,

\* Id. ib.    † D'Alt.


that

than that artful princess began seriously to plan a defensive treaty between her children and the Helvetic republics. To the overtures made for this purpose, the senate of Berne readily assented, provided the duchess as a previous step toward reconciliation would expressly renounce all claims on Friburg.

The interested politics of the house of Savoy, which never willingly trod backward the path of aggrandisement, sought in vain to elude the demand. The senate would admit of no subterfuge; and Jolanda was ultimately constrained to comply. Friburg, now completely emancipated from foreign jurisdiction, and having acquired wisdom in the school of adversity, at length embraced the only rational scheme, which under similar circumstances it was possible to adopt, and became a member of the Helvetic confederacy\*.

Scarcely any city of Helvetia can vie with Soleure for antiquity. The fabulous accounts, transmitted to us respecting it's

\* D'Alt, IV. May, IV. ix.

CHAP. infant state, though in every other respect un-  
 XXII.  deserving of notice, clearly indicate that it was founded at a period, of which no authentic records are preserved. From Cæsar we learn, that it was burned by the Helvetii, as a preparatory step to their rash invasion of Gaul\*. Subsequent historians inform us, that it was a second time destroyed by the barbarians, who overturned the dominion of Rome†.

In process of time, we again behold it rising from its ashes, and comprised in the Burgundian division of Helvetia. To the pious Bertha it was ultimately indebted for stability and consequence; as by the foundation of a celebrated monastery that devout princess attracted crowds of pilgrims to its walls, and thus established for it a permanent source of wealth and prosperity‡.

The strictest amity seems always to have subsisted between Soleure and Berne. We

\* Solodurum, as it was then called, is supposed to have been built about A. U. C. 650. In the reign of Augustus it was rebuilt, and became the capital of the Pagus Urbi-genus. May, II. iv.

† Id. ib.

‡ Id. ib.

have

have frequently beheld them struggling together in the cause of freedom, and invariably crowned with success. The long and honourable contest, maintained against the house of Burgdorf, has been mentioned in a former chapter. The fortune of Soleure indeed was so intimately connected with that of Berne, that the most material steps in her progress toward independence, have been already described. We have seen her engaged in the siege of Nidau signing the *decree of Sempach*, taking part in the conquest of the Thurgau and Argau, standing forward to oppose the ambition of Zurich, and finally uniting her victorious cohorts with those of federative Helvetia, to chastise the temerity of Burgundy.

The accession of two additional cantons made it advisable to extend the limits, within which the confederates were bound to act. The ancient line was accordingly prolonged, and after passing through the county of Gruyeres, and skirting the eastern shore of the lake of Morat, terminated at the bridge of Gummingen. On the side of Soleure it stretched to the confines of

CHAP. the bishopric of Bâle, and was thence con-  
XXII. tinued through Thierstein, Falkenstein, and  
Rieberg to the Aar.

At the conclusion of the second volume, we drew a picture of Helvetia, which with some slight exceptions is not inapplicable to her present condition. The final destruction of the Burgundian power had indeed given a lustre to her military character, and a degree of stability to her government, which not only raised her to a distinguished rank among the nations of Europe, but enabled her to take an active part in all their subsequent concerns. While she was thus increasing in strength and in reputation, the power, from which she had most to apprehend, became daily less an object of terror. Convulsed by intestine discord, and enervated by exertions too vast for her resources, Austria presented a melancholy picture of vanity and weakness; whereas the inflexible resolution to be free gave an energy to the operations of the rising republics, which no inferior motive could have inspired.

In the conduct of Sigismund, we discover

ver a striking proof of Austrian debility. CHAP.  
XXII.  
At one time, we behold him abjectly imploring the protection of the duke of Burgundy against the warlike inhabitants of the Alps. At another, disgusted with the friendship of a man, whose favours were conferred with an air of superiority bordering nearly upon insult, he is seen throwing off the humiliating yoke, and courting the assistance of an ancient foe, to recover his mortgaged provinces from an insatiable ally. Thus by a strange vicissitude of fortune, republican Helvetia became the protectress of a family, from whose inordinate grasp, scarcely a century before, she had thought herself happy to escape.

Freed from their apprehensions on the part of Austria, the confederates forsook the laudable system of moderation, which had hitherto guided their political conduct. But it is not our intention to retrace those scenes of horror, which ought to render the Zurich war a memorable lesson to mankind. From events like those which have been already recorded, a moral may be

A a 4

drawn,

CHAP. drawn, peculiarly applicable to the present  
XXII. times. By contéplating the miseries inseparable from civil war, we learn to approach the sanctuary of the constitution with religious veneration; and to prefer a system of practical wisdom, sanctioned by the experience and the prosperity of ages, to the ill-digested chimeras of visionary and empirical reformers.

Under the effectual instruction of practice, the Swiss had reduced the art of war to a regular science. In their early battles they trusted solely to bodily strength and valour. But their armies now moved with method and order; while military tactics gave additional efficacy to corporeal exertions. The desperate resolution, with which a handful of men defended an unfortified post against the armies of France, conferred a splendor upon the Helvetic name, to which no modern people had attained. Lewis, like a sagacious politician, knew how to estimate the value of such allies, and by a subsequent treaty gave rise to that intimate union, which so long subsisted between the two nations.

But

But in proportion as Helvetia extended her territory, the defects of her constitution became every day more apparent. The great distinctions, which existed in the internal administration of her different cantons, their unequal advantages, with respect to commerce, as well as the ascendancy usurped in foreign negotiations, by the aristocratical states, could not fail to excite that malevolent spirit of envy, which has ever been the bane of all federative governments. Experience, however, had evinced the necessity of a reform, and prudence accomplished it with moderation. From this moment her constitution assumed a more uniform shape; most of its exuberances were lopped away, and the result was strength, symmetry, and utility.

The sphere of her power comprehended an extent of territory nearly equal to that, which she recently possessed, when she perished in the universal wreck of continental independence. Friburg and Soleure had been newly incorporated, while the other provinces of Switzerland, subsequently admitted into the league, were then attached

CHAP.  
XXII.



CHAP. tached to it by the closest ties of mutual  
XXII. amity. The Pais de Vaud, indeed, was  
not yet annexed to the republic of Berne; but several of its towns had been ceded, and those important conquests paved the way for its total subjugation.

By the rigorous observation of military discipline, and a punctilious adherence to all their engagements, the Swiss had acquired great and merited renown. These, however, were transient qualities, and diminished daily as plunder became an object of ambition, and foreign gold was regarded as an adequate compensation for Helvetic blood. By this guilty traffic, immense sums were annually drained from foreign states: while under various denominations, as the reward of venal service or the price of mercenary policy, a sudden influx of wealth corrupted the morals of Switzerland. In the course of the Burgundian war, the refusal of the democratic cantons to co-operate in the labours of a siege afforded a striking instance of declining patriotism, as it proceeded solely from an unfounded jealousy of the municipal

cial states. Of this dissimilarity of views and interests, a dissimilarity inseparable from federative constitutions, continual struggles were the necessary consequence.

CHAP.  
XXII.  
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To keep together a body, composed of such heterogeneous parts, some powerful corrective was required; and fortunately it was found, in the grateful remembrance of former services, and in the delightful sentiment of reciprocal esteem; but its richest source was a passion for liberty, the most enthusiastic perhaps that ever warmed the human heart.

Among the prudent and enlightened, the increasing rage for military enterprise became an object of serious alarm. But the emoluments, arising from foreign warfare, were temptations too strong for the virtue of a people, whose ruling passion was the love of gain. Notwithstanding the vigilance of the magistrates, and the severity of the laws, numbers daily quitted their native soil, in search of wealth and glory. To restrain this spirit of emigration, various edicts were successively promulgated and enforced by the severest penalties. In
some

CHAP. some cantons, a new form of oath was

XXII.

administered with every solemnity, which could tend to inspire awe, binding their subjects never to abandon their country without permission. A measure like this is seldom productive of substantial benefit; for, by demonstrating the weakness of the ruling powers, it operates as an incentive to disobedience.

1489. In a country, agitated by interests so discordant, it was natural to expect frequent instances of insubordination. The destiny of Waldman affords a memorable instance of the instability of popular favour; and exhibits, at the same time, a frightful picture of the inefficiency of governments, where the machinations of faction are superior to the authority of the laws.

Waldman was born in an obscure village, in the canton of Zug, of poor but reputable parents. At an early period of life, he was sent to Zurich, and apprenticed to a tanner. As he advanced in years and in fortune, his natural genius directed his thoughts and studies to the science of war,

war. Having passed with increasing fame through the various gradations of military service, he was intrusted with an important command in the Burgundian war, and essentially contributed, by the excellence of his arrangements, to the victory of Morat. On the field of battle, he received the honour of knighthood, a distinction then coveted by the most illustrious personages, and regarded as the noblest recompence that valour could obtain. CHAP. XXII.

His influence in the government of his adopted country became thenceforth unbounded, and he successively filled all its highest offices. His fortune, likewise, kept pace with his reputation ; the credit, which he possessed with all the cantons, rendering it necessary for those, who courted the friendship of Switzerland, to secure his interest by unlimited oblations of flattery and of gold. Persuaded that his claims to distinction were deduced from principles more rational than those of birth, Waldman derided the impotent malice of patrician envy, and contenting himself with the conscious feeling of superiority, disdained

CHAP. dained to solicit the public suffrage by
XXII. the usual arts of popularity. Yet in the
magnificence of his retinue, and the luxury
of his table, he surpassed all the ancient
nobility ; and seemed as fond of displaying
his riches, as if he had possessed no other
pretensions to favour.

Successful speculations in trade, combining with the profits of war, had introduced a taste for dissipation and expense, which called for sumptuary restrictions. With a violence, natural to his character, Waldman undertook the unpopular task. But while he rigorously restrained the excesses of the opulent, he imprudently introduced a clause, exempting the aristocracy (among whom, by virtue of his knight-hood, he was proud to rank) from many of the most salutary regulations. This measure, so contrary to the true spirit of a republican government, excited universal discontent. The young and profligate of every class, though acting from different motives, united in reprobating the impolitic distinction. Even the women, in defiance of decency, commenced politicians, and exerted

exerted all their influence in opposition to **CHAP.**
a law, which seemed particularly levelled **XXII.**
at their own misconduct.

Meanwhile the reform was progressively extended to objects, more important than those of dress. Abuses of the most pernicious tendency, which had gradually crept into every department, demanded a strict and dispassionate investigation. A new system was, in consequence, established for collecting the public revenues ; a more vigilant administration appointed for the management of national property, and fresh statutes enacted for the preservation of game. Considering every restriction as oppressive, which interfered with their favourite pursuits, the peasantry assembled in a numerous body, and marching to Zurich demanded the immediate repeal of the obnoxious edict, under the pretence that it was subversive of the inherent rights of man. Having advanced too far to recede, without exposing their authority to derision, the magistrates resolved to persist ; and by ill-timed exertions of authority ventured still farther to exasperate

CHAP. perate the complainants, who now pro-
XXII. ceeded to marshal themselves under able
and enterprising leaders.

Aware of the dangerous consequences of the example, should the insurgents succeed in carrying their point, the other cantons deemed it prudent to interfere. By their mediation, mutual sacrifices were stipulated, and a temporary calm restored. The magistrates consented to soften the most unpalatable decrees, while their opponents in return acknowledged their error in having resorted to arms for redress.

The wound was thus seared over, but the cause of the malady was far from being removed ; nor was the behaviour of Waldman calculated to promote a cure. Instead of endeavouring by lenient treatment to mitigate the general irritation, the remedies, which he suggested, tended directly to increase it. Endowed by nature with a proud and inflexible temper, and accustomed to the rigid discipline of a camp, he opposed every compromise as degrading, unmanly, and impolitic. He thought it the duty of a magistrate, either to enforce

force the execution of the laws, or to die with courage in the attempt. Upon all occasions he spoke of the people with disrespect, refused to listen to their complaints, and uniformly interpreted every doubtful statute to their disadvantage.

CHAP.
XXII.

The storm was gathering afresh, and threatened to rage with greater violence than ever. The insurgents were convinced that they had been deceived, and that in consenting to a treaty the only object of their rulers had been to gain time, in order to act in future with greater effect. Their hatred of Waldman grew daily more violent. Alarmed for his safety, his friends entreated him to remove from Zurich till public tranquillity should be restored. With difficulty they extorted a reluctant compliance, and he retired to Baden. But, instead of confining himself to a domestic and recluse life, he still continued to indulge his passion for pomp; and never spoke of public affairs, except in a tone of asperity or contempt, which served only to heighten the popular indignation.

CHAP. XXII. Meanwhile, all his actions were attentively watched; and every word, which would admit of a doubtful construction, was invariably represented in the most unfavourable sense. At one time, he was forming plans for subverting the liberties of his country. At another, he was actually marching at the head of an Austrian army, to avenge his controverted authority by the destruction of his enemies. These and similar falsehoods succeeded in exciting a general insurrection. The rebels assembled in considerable force, assumed the appearance of a regular army, and indicated by their systematical plans, that they no longer consisted of an undisciplined rabble, but acted in concert with the disaffected burghers.

Waldman was not of a disposition to be easily intimidated. No sooner did he hear that they had taken the field, than quitting his retreat he flew to Zurich, desirous if possible to prevent the senate from debasing its authority by disgraceful concessions; though determined at the same time, not to oppose a reconciliation, provided

provided it could be effected on honourable terms. Finding all hope of an accommodation destroyed, and resolving not to be taken unawares, he constantly wore concealed armour, and always appeared in public under the protection of a numerous escort. A practice so unusual furnished fresh subject of complaint. Affecting to be alarmed for their own safety, the lowest mechanics scarcely ever ventured abroad without arms. Hence frequent skirmishes took place in the streets, in one of which an attendant of Waldman's was killed, while accompanying him in the execution of official business.

Perceiving that affairs were now hastening to a crisis, and desirous of ascertaining how far he might depend on the support of those, who professed the warmest attachment for his person, Waldman called the citizens together, and addressed them with that forcible and pathetic eloquence, to which they had so frequently listened with delight. With the pride of conscious virtue, he dwelt on the services which he had performed ; and called upon all, who

B b 2

valued

CHAP. valued liberty, to rally round and to protect him. The effect produced on the mind of his auditors, was sudden and decisive.* They felt his merits, and resolved to give him their stedfast support. At this moment, a large body of the meanest populace rushed into the hall, with a peremptory demand of vengeance. Many deputies from the other cantons were present at the atrocious scene; and united with the municipal officers in attempting to quell the tumult; vainly hoping that the sacred character, with which they were invested, would awe the seditious into obedience. But neither prayers nor remonstrances were attended to. The cry was, 'Blood! The blood of traitors.' The mob insisted, that Waldman and his associates should be led to the place of execution; and it was with extreme difficulty, that they agreed to defer their vengeance till their victims could be brought to a public trial.

The insurgents now deposed the regular

* Mallet, II. 269.

functionaries,

functionaries, and proceed to model the government after their own fancy. The administration of affairs was confided to a council of sixty members, selected from the lowest mechanics. This tribunal, justly odious for the severity of its proceedings, was called in derision the HORNY SENATE.*

No sooner were they installed in office, than Waldman was brought before them. Of the various accusations preferred against him, many were contradictory, and all unsupported by facts. By one witness he was charged with having carried on a secret correspondence with the imperial court; and it was alleged, that in return for betraying his country he was to be raised to the dignity of count, and rewarded with the territory of Kyburg. By a second, he was accused of having sold himself to the duke of Milan: while a third asserted, that he was in the pay of France.†

* Mallet, II. 270.

† Id. ib.

CHAP.

XXII.

Charges so inconsistent served only to destroy each other. But, in the eye of prejudice, nothing can be too absurd to obtain belief. In vain Waldman averred his innocence, and appealed to the memory of his former exploits. He acknowledged indeed having received considerable presents from foreign princes : but he insisted, that “ in accepting them, he acted “ in conformity to established practice. “ He was no stranger (he added) to the “ source, whence the persecution flowed. “ It had been the constant study of his “ life, to promote the glory and the prosperity of Zurich. In the prosecution of “ that duty, it had frequently been his “ lot to contend against the interested “ ambition of the clergy, and thus to incur their implacable hatred : But such “ (he said) must ever be the lot of those, “ who dared, like him, in such a situation, “ to act with integrity. The man, who “ ventures to combat the usurpations of “ the priesthood, must be prepared to encounter their calumnies in the present world,

“ world, and to brave their anathemas in
“ the world to come.”

CHAP.
XXII.

Thus did he repel every attack, with the dignified serenity of a man, who scorns to solicit mercy from a corrupt tribunal. Unable to substantiate a single fact by legal proof, the judges ordered him to be tortured, under the pretext of extorting from himself a confession of his crimes. But innocence was again triumphant. The fortitude, which he displayed upon this trying occasion, excited general admiration, and even softened the rancour of many, who had been hitherto blindly devoted to the adverse faction.

The court again assembled, in order to pronounce their final sentence. But the violence of party was so much abated, that his enemies being afraid to put the question to the vote, had recourse to strata-gem to effect their purpose. During the heat of the debate, a messenger entered pale and breathless. In a voice apparently rendered tremulous by alarm, he acquainted the court, that a large body of Austrians had crossed the Rhine, and with the avow-

B b 4

ed

CHAP. ed object of rescuing Waldman was march-
XXII. ing toward Zurich.

The emotion, created by this intelligence, reason was unable to combat. The greater part of the assembly, struck with dismay, pronounced the author of the public danger unworthy compassion; while the populace with repeated clamors called for vengeance. Availing themselves of the tumult, which they had excited, the judges immediately passed sentence. With indecent haste Waldman was conducted to the place of execution, where he tranquilly stretched out his neck to receive the fatal blow.

A spectacle, so imposing, produced a strong sensation upon the feelings of the spectators. But pity was converted to indignation, when holding up the head of the murdered hero, the executioner declared to the astonished multitude, that they might separate in perfect security, since the object of their hatred was no more, and the report of an invasion was totally without foundation.*

* Mallet, II. 271.

Having

Having thus removed the most formidable champion of the ancient constitution, the democratic faction set no bounds to their innovations, but swept away every existing establishment with indiscriminate violence. Neither was their malice confined to establishments. The most distinguished citizens, on the most frivolous pretences, were brought to trial. Of these some were condemned to pay excessive fines; while others suffered the most opprobrious deaths. Meanwhile, the public money was squandered with useless prodigality, and fresh confiscations were resorted to, as the easiest expedient for filling the treasury.*

The miserable state, to which Zurich was now reduced, excited the compassion of her sister-republics, and called for their interference. In this, as in all works of public utility, the senate of Berne took the lead: and by them the democratic cantons, notwithstanding their inveterate prejudices against every form of government,

* Id. ib.

where

CHAP. where universal suffrage was excluded,
XXII. were induced to concur in the undertaking. The *Horny Senate* was deposed, and the ancient constitution restored. The peasants, however, with more refractory perseverance continued to brave the menaces of the diet, till they learned that an army was actually marching to enforce submission.

One of the first occupations of the new government was to reverse the iniquitous sentence, by which Waldman had suffered. In a public decree, rescuing his character from aspersion, he received the only recompense which remained for national gratitude to confer.*

It was supposed at their commencement, that these dissensions had been clandestinely fomented by the rural cantons. But the spirit of insubordination was so rapidly diffused, that the most strenuous friends of democracy agreed in the necessity of coercive measures to re-establish order and tranquillity. In all the other

* Tschärner, Bullinger, Stettler.

cantons a secret sympathy stimulated the leading members to espouse the cause of Waldman, with an ardour more fervent, than compassion unsupported by the suggestions of interest could have inspired. Few of them indeed would have been exempt from guilt, if the receiving of pensions from foreign courts had been irreversibly stamped with criminality. Of the general corruption some idea may be formed from a charge preferred, at the Helvetic diet, by the delegates of Schweitz against all the aristocratic states. They were accused of unfairness in distributing the French subsidies ; and of having appropriated to themselves, to the injury of the smaller cantons, the principal part of the Burgundian spoil. For this they proceeded to suggest, as a corrective (though the proposal, they must have been assured, would only add to their own popularity), “ that the people in the aristocratic states should be permitted to assemble at all times, when the exigency of affairs seemed to require their interference. To determine this necessity was to depend on themselves. On

5 their

CHAP.
XXII.

CHAP. their arbitrary requisition the public ac-
 XXII. counts were to be laid before them, as the
 ~~~~~ only efficacious remedy against patrician  
 delinquency ! \*

By the delegates of Berne this project was resisted as a dangerous innovation, subversive of the fundamental principles of the Helvetic constitution. They insisted, at the same time, that the insinuations were absolutely unfounded, and boldly defied their accusers to produce a single instance of peculation. Whether the démocratic cantons were unwilling to proceed to extremities, or were unable to substantiate their charge, it would be useless here to investigate. All farther inquiries ceased. †

These dissensions were scarcely appeased, before the turbulence of the Appenzellers excited fresh commotions. Between them and the abbot of St. Gal, an implacable animosity had long subsisted. The exhausted finances of the latter, indeed, had for some time contributed to the main-

\* Mallet,

† Stettler,

tenance

tenance of peace. But no sooner had he established order and economy in the administration of his revenues, than he began to nourish the chimerical hope of recovering the territory, which had been lost by the mismanagement of his predecessors. Desirous also of acquiring celebrity by acts of munificence, he determined to restore the decaying monastery to its pristine splendor, in order to render it more adequate to the dominions, over which he flattered himself speedily to preside.

The town of St. Gal had become independent; and the land upon which Ulric was desirous to erect some additional buildings, was claimed by the citizens. He applied to the magistrates for permission to purchase it, and received a peremptory refusal. Exasperated at a measure, which he naturally attributed to a sinister motive, he hastily determined in revenge to remove his residence to some other place. A spot was accordingly chosen, in the romantic valley of Rorschach, for the scite of a more spacious and more magnificent edifice. The consent of the  
papal

CHAP.  
XXII.

CHAP. papal and imperial courts had been pre-  
XXII. viously obtained ; but the inclinations of those, whose interests were most deeply at stake, had never been consulted. The Appenzellers and the citizens of St. Gal were decidedly averse to the plan : the former, impelled by their natural turbulence, and a strong propensity toward war ; the latter, upon more rational grounds, as feeling themselves materially concerned in opposing a scheme, which could not fail to operate powerfully on their future prosperity.

As their remonstrances however were treated with neglect, and the splendid fabric continued to advance, they deemed it expedient to adopt a system more efficacious than that of complaint. Assembling in considerable numbers, their united forces marched to Rorschach ; and having driven away the workmen, not only overturned the rising palace to it's foundations, but even pillaged a chapel, which had been already consecrated, of all it's costly plate and decorations.\*

\* May, IV. xi.

Uric

Ulric beheld the devastation with the most poignant sorrow, and implored the aid of the Helvetic diet; offering at the same time to submit implicitly to their award, provided his rebellious subjects (for so he still affected to call them) would consent to the arbitration. Anxious to re-establish peace between the contending parties, the cantons exhausted every method of persuasion, before they attempted to enforce obedience by the sword. The Appenzellers, however, turned a deaf ear to all their exhortations. Swendiner, who then filled the important office of *landamman*, was endowed with a spirit not less violent than ambitious. By the influence of this presumptuous man, who wished to emancipate his country from all feudal claims, every overture toward an accommodation was rejected. The independence of Appenzel was also asserted in language so arrogant, that no choice was left to the mediating cantons but to proceed to measures of coercion. For some time, the insurgents affected to brave the storm. But when they received unquestionable

CHAP.  
XXII.

CHAP. tionable intelligence, that an army was  
 XXII. actually on it's march, their courage failed,  
 and a magistrate was sent with offers of  
 unconditional submission to the enemy's  
 camp.

The confederates however insisted, as a preliminary article, that the author of the war should be banished. To this mortifying demand necessity compelled them to submit; and Swendiner, in consequence, received orders to depart.

Nor were the other conditions, prescribed by the arbitrators, less difficult of digestion. The alliance between Appenzel and St. Gal was annulled, while the four mediating cantons\* retained possession of the Rheinthal and Hohensax, as an indemnification for the expences of the war.†

Were it necessary to adduce an additional proof of the degeneracy of Helvetic virtue, it would be found in this award. The Mediators might indeed allege the example of the Romans, in vindication of their fla-

\* Zurich, Lucerne, Schweitz, and Glaris.

† Mallet, II. 277. May, ib.

grant

grant misconduct. But is there a crime, CHAP. XXII.  
in the annals of ambition, which may not  
be defended by precedent? Dignified as  
she was by the brightest examples of pa-  
triotism, and occasionally exalted by the  
virtue of her children above the ordinary  
level of mortality, Rome, when impartially  
examined, exhibits in her history a sys-  
tematical plan of fraud, injustice, and op-  
pression. . . . Unlike the just Aristides, these  
haughty republicans never attended to the  
propriety of an action, when it promoted  
the interests of the commonwealth.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

*Affairs of Italy—Conduct of Ludovico Sforza—Claims of Charles VIII. to the Throne of Naples—Rome—Flagitious Character of Alexander VI.—Venice—Charles conquers Italy—His hasty Retreat.*

CHAP.  
XXIII.

**H**ITHERTO we have seen Helvetic blood heroically shed in the defence of national freedom. We shall hereafter behold it profusely flowing in mercenary service.

Though continually a prey to the intrigues and crimes of contending factions, Italy, long exempted from the horrors of invasion, had grown rich amidst the speculations of commerce, the revival of the arts, and the progress of science. It was, at this period, divided into five principal states;

the duchy of Milan, the two republics of Venice and Florence, the ecclesiastical dominions, and the kingdom of Naples. The remainder was parcelled out into a variety of little territories, whose existence depended on the patronage of their more powerful neighbours. Under the pompous title of republics, some of these pigmy commonwealths were incessantly struggling with their domestic tyrants for a phantom of liberty, like the cities of ancient Greece : while others, deprived even of the shadow of freedom, were subject to despots ; whose pernicious authority, too often the compensation of illegitimacy, was derived from the pride and sensuality of Rome.

The frequent revolutions consequent upon this irregular system, though often productive of the most atrocious crimes, seldom produced any material change in the general balance of Italian power. It was obviously the policy of it's five great powers to exclude all foreign princes from intermeddling in the politics of that beautiful peninsula, which had successively exhibited the human character in all it's va-

CHAP. rious gradations between exalted heroism  
XXIII. and abject superstition.

The house of Arragon was now tranquilly seated on the throne of Naples, and had little to fear, except from the arms and the ambition of France. Yet, remote as this danger appeared, little doubt could exist, that if the French once obtained a footing in the Milanese, they would attempt the subjugation of a country, where they already possessed such complicated claims. In the prevention of this, the intermediate states, particularly those of Rome and Florence, were equally interested; as in case of hostilities, they would inevitably be exposed to the calamities inseparable from the march of an army, or constrained to purchase a precarious safety by declaring in favour of the successful party.

Nothing therefore could prove more injurious to the commerce, or more alarming to the liberties of Italy, than the introduction of a Gallic army. Yet this great maxim of national security, was exposed to various modifications, from the particular

particular views and connections of each individual commonwealth. The dangers, to which we have alluded, although certain were remote, and lost their effect in a considerable degree, from being common to all the Cisalpine powers: while the inferior interests of the moment were viewed through the magnifying medium of caprice or of passion,

In this state of affairs, ambition was actively occupied in preparing scenes of future woe. Ludovico Sforza, surnamed 'the *Moor*,'\* who had long governed Milan in the name of his feeble nephew John Galeazzo, aspired to a more permanent dominion, than he had hitherto enjoyed. To accomplish this, however, was no easy task. Beside the reigning prince, there existed another competitor, whose title was preferable to his own.

\* This surname most historians consider as characteristic of Ludovico's heart. But it was more probably derived from the mulberry-tree (in Italian, *moro*) which he bore, by way of a device, on his shield, and regarded as an emblem of prudence. Acad. des Belles Lettres, XVI. 238.

CHAP.

XXIII.

Descended from Valentina, the legitimate representative of the Visconti family, the duke of Orleans had every claim to the sceptre of Milan, which lineal descent could confer. Nor was it possible for Ludovico long to retain the administration of affairs even if Galeazzo should be suffered to live. That young prince had lately married Isabella, the daughter of Alfonso king of Naples, a woman of a lofty and enterprising genius; who, conscious of her husband's incapacity, and resolved to assert his rights, had already taken some decisive steps to rescue him from his ignominious thralldom.

Though artful, treacherous, and cruel in an eminent degree, Ludovico was totally destitute of those brilliant qualities, which originally raised his family from obscurity. Perceiving that the basis upon which his authority rested, began to totter, he determined to support it by foreign aid. Indifferent to the means employed, provided he ultimately attained his ends, he tried every artifice to induce Charles VIII. king of France, to enter Italy at the head of a  
 numerous

numerous army;\* holding out, among CHAP. other incentives, the crown of Naples† as XXIII. the certain reward of success.

That monarch had pretensions to the Sicilian throne, which in the eyes of inexperienced youth might easily be regarded as incontrovertible, derived from the cession made by Charles of Anjou, count of Provence, to Lewis XI.† Foreseeing however the evils to which by a disputed title he might be exposed, Lewis had contented himself with the acquisition of the provinces actually subject to Charles, without involving the prosperity of his kingdom in the inextricable maze of Italian politics. His son, on the contrary, dazzled by the splendour of the enterprise, totally overlooked the difficulties by which it might be accompanied.

In order to form a more distinct idea of the events, which are about to occupy our attention, it becomes requisite to revert to the annals of the thirteenth cen-

\* Guiccardini, I. 19. ed. Frih.

† Id. ib.

‡ Id. ib.

CHAP. tury. We there find that Manfred, an  
 XXIII. illegitimate son of the emperor Frederic II.  
 after having murdered his elder brother, usurped the throne of Naples.\* Impelled by jealousy of the house of Suabia, the pope refused to acknowledge the usurper's title, and conferred the investiture of that kingdom on Charles of Anjou† (the brother of St. Lewis, king of France) who consented to hold it, as an ecclesiastical fief. A war ensued, in which Manfred fell, leaving his rival in full possession of the disputed crown.

By his cruelty toward the friends and adherents of Manfred, Charles tarnished the laurels which he had reaped in the contest. But no action so effectually alienated the affection of his Italian subjects, as the death of Conradin, the only surviving remnant of the Suabian line. That gallant youth intrepidly asserted his rights to his latest moments, and from the scaf-

\* M. de Voltaire denies the truth of this assertion, though supported by the testimony of most historians.

† Guicciard. I. 20.

fold

fold declared Peter of Arragon his heir. CHAP. XXIII.  
 Availing himself of the general indignation excited by this sanguinary scene, Peter armed the nation in his cause.\* After a long and bloody struggle, fortune ultimately declared in favour of the Arragonian representative, who transmitted the sceptre to a bastard line. The Angevin race, however, treasured up their precarious title, as an abundant source of future wars.†

In the preceding volume, we have traced the progressive usurpations of the Roman pontiffs from their earliest source ; and, in the present, we have seen Sixtus IV. exerting all the influence of superstition, and of gold, to arm the Swiss in his defence. This treaty was renewed by Innocent VIII. who courted the alliance of Helvetia as his securest protection against the enterprising ambition of the Sicilian princes. To him succeeded the dissolute and cruel Borgia, who under the hateful name of Alexander VI. not

\* Giannone, Storia di Napole, XIX. iv.

† *Id.* XXVI. ii.

only



CHAP. only polluted the sacred character of religion, but even degraded the human species, by the unprecedented enormity of his crimes.  
 XXIII.

None of the Italian states, if we except Rome, was so intimately connected with the rest of Europe, as the republic of Venice. By a wise administration, and a well-directed commerce, that extraordinary government had not only attained to a high degree of political eminence, but was enabled also to support such a military establishment, as secured all the blessings of peace\*.

1494. Such was the situation of Italy, when Charles VIII. crossed the Alps at the head of a formidable army, six thousand of whom were Swiss. Another body of nearly equal force had enrolled themselves under the bailiff of Dijon, in contempt of the ordinances of their respective cantons, who now seriously endeavoured to restrain the increasing spirit of enterprise by the

\* Robertson's Disquisition concerning India, p. 130.

most rigorous decrees. Perceiving how ever that no edicts could remedy the evil, the Helvetic diet deputed commissioners to demand from the French general the immediate discharge of every man, who had been clandestinely engaged. So high stood the reputation of the Swiss infantry, that in parting with them every hope of victory must have been abandoned\*. Yet unwilling to give offence by an unqualified refusal, the commander replied, “ that though he sincerely wished to oblige such good and faithful allies, it was unfortunately out of his power; as the troops incorporated in the different regiments, were cantoned at such a distance from each other, that it would be a work of extreme difficulty to collect them to-

\* The Swiss were, at this time, the best-disciplined infantry in Europe. The Italian foot consisted entirely of the vilest dregs of society. Nor had the French infantry yet attained to any degree of excellence; though their cavalry, composed exclusively of gentlemen, were highly distinguished for discipline and valour. Guicciardini calls the Swiss, *il nervo è la speranza del esercito*. Comines terms them, *l'esperance de l'ost*.

“ gether.”

CHAP. "gether." He farther added, by way of  
 XXIII. palliative, " that if the Swiss would place  
 " themselves in the situation of his royal  
 " master, they must be sensible that he  
 " could not, without the greatest detri-  
 " ment to his service, fulfil their request ;  
 " as upon the valour and experience of the  
 " Helvetic infantry he rested his principal  
 " hopes of success."

Not satisfied however with these assurances of regard, the general prevailed on the king himself to write to the diet, in order more fully to explain his motives ; convinced, that such a flattering mark of condescension would interest their vanity in his favour. The magistrates complied with all his demands. Notwithstanding this apparent agreement, however, some of the cantons were so much exasperated at Charles' equivocal conduct, that they were never cordially reconciled to France, during the remainder of his reign \*.

\* Watteville, *Histoire de la Confédération Helvétique*, II. 7.

The rapid progress of the French in Italy would appear incredible, did we not discover in the political relations and internal state of that delightful country a source of debility, which tended materially to facilitate the conquest. Italy, since it's emancipation from a foreign yoke, had established a system, both in civil and military affairs, which was entirely dissimilar to that of every other people. Inattentive to the concerns and interests of the more northern nations, whom (in conformity to the classical authorities of Greece and Rome) they insulted with the appellation of *Barbarians*, they were continually occupied in partitions and negociations, in order to preserve the domestic balance of power. It cannot be supposed, that transactions so intricate could always be terminated without occasional references to the sword. But whenever war became necessary, it's operations usually bore a greater analogy to the evolutions of a modern review, than to the din and horror of an actual engagement. No sooner therefore were they informed of the dangers with which  
their

CHAP. their country was menaced by a foreign  
XXIII. army, than persons of every description  
were overwhelmed with dismay. Too weak  
to oppose the storm, they had recourse to  
intrigue, the only weapon which they had  
been accustomed to wield with success;  
and finding that ineffectual, abandoned  
their cause as desperate\*.

Upon his arrival in Lombardy, Charles  
was received by the duke of Milan with  
the cordiality of a friend, and the flattery  
of a courtier. A general sentiment of in-  
dignation indeed pervaded the French ar-  
my, at the sight of a man, whose hands  
were embrued in his nephew's blood†.  
But the king, fascinated by the brilliant  
prospect before him, grew indifferent to  
every other consideration; and shutting  
his ears to the dictates of prudence and  
honour, advanced into the heart of Italy,  
without farther delay.

In vain did Pietro de Medici admonish

\* Guicciard. ib. 76.

† *Ne fa alcuno che dubitasse, che se era stato veleno, non gli fosse stato dato per opera del zio.* Id. ib. 81.

his

his countrymen of the impending tempest. CHAP.  
In vain did he attempt to stem it's fury. XXIII.

Defeated in the first encounter, he threw himself upon the clemency of the conqueror, and sued for pardon\*. But the cabals of his enemies so far prevailed, that the heir of the wealthiest and most generous of mankind was compelled to terminate a miserable existence in poverty and exile.

On the approach of the Gallic army, Florence opened her gates, prepared to celebrate with festive joy the return of her liberty. The statues, which gratitude had erected to benevolence, were broken into pieces, and the reign of licentiousness was established upon the ruins of the laws.

Delighted with the change, so easily effected in the destiny of that illustrious city, the king pursued his triumphant march toward the capital of the christian world. The descendent of a noble Spanish family, Borgia, had been distinguished from his earliest youth by a taste for de-

\* Id. ib. 87.

bauchery

CHAP. bauchery and the love of intrigue. Artful,  
XXIII.

insinuating, and ambitious, he was haughty or submissive, placable or relentless, exactly as interest dictated. To every sentiment of morality, of honour, and of decency his heart was equally a stranger\*. Yet he sometimes assumed the mask of hypocrisy, as a convenient disguise in the pursuits of ambition; and arrayed himself in the garb of innocence, when it seemed likely to contribute to the seduction of virtue. . Arrived at the summit of human grandeur, he presented to the astonished world the frightful picture of systematical depravity seated on the throne of an apostle, unblushingly trampling every law divine and human, beneath his feet.

Convinced that he deserved no mercy from mankind, and believing the hour of retribution to be arrived, at the approach of the French, he retired to the castle of St. Angelo. Here, however, he was far from being secure, as he was destitute of every thing requisite to enable him to sustain a siege.

\* Guicciard. lib. 8.

From

From his knowledge therefore of the ruling foibles of Charles, he had recourse to negociation; and presenting a scene of glory to his romantic mind, more brilliant than any to which it had hitherto aspired, offered to surrender Zizim, the rival of Bajazet, as the price of forgiveness\*. A reconciliation

CHAP.  
XXIII.

\* *Jem*, or *Zizim*, (as he is more frequently called by the christian writers) was the eldest of the sons of Mahomet II. who had been born after he succeeded to the throne. Being a prince of an aspiring genius, he laid claim to the crown, under the pretence, that his elder brother Bajazet, as born before his father's accession, was only the son of a private man. The decision of the dispute being referred to the sword, fortune declared in favour of Bajazet, and Zizim fled to Rhodes for protection. There he was inhospitably imprisoned by the grand-master. Not daring, however, to complete his crime by the murder of his illustrious captive, he transferred him to the custody of the Borgias, from whose hands he was convinced, so long as any advantage could arise from detaining him, he would never escape. Alexander knew the value of his captive. While the life of Zizim was more profitable than his death, he was suffered to live. Nor was he at last delivered into the power of Charles, till poison had secured him from disturbing the repose of the Ottoman empire, and entitled the Vicar General of God to the reward offered by Bajazet as the price of his



CHAP. reconciliation in consequence took place,  
XXIII. by which the Borgias were confirmed in all their usurpations\*.

The timid and cruel Ferdinand was no more. On receiving intelligence that the French were in full march toward Naples, he was panic-struck, and died (as contemporary historians assert) of the fright. His son Alphonso, not less weak and wicked than his father, fled into Sicily†, where he resigned a crown, which his vices had rendered him unworthy to retain‡. Uniting caution with courage, Ferdinand II. resolved to wait for a more favourable opportunity to assert his title, not doubting that it would soon be found, either in the inconstancy of his own subjects, or in the temerity of the foe.

While his generals were occupied in subjugating the remoter provinces, Charles

his brother's blood. This story is given, in detail, by Jovius.

\* Guicciardini, lib. i, p. 106.

† Id. ib. 108. Bembo pretends, that he died a natural death. Istoria Viniziana, l. 55.

‡ Bembo. ib. 67.

entered

entered Naples with all the insignia of royalty, and wearing on his head the crown of the Cæsars. Seduced by the pomp and novelty of the scene, the populace hailed his triumph with loud acclamations. Every vestige of Arragonian supremacy was effaced, and the victorious lilies were displayed upon every public edifice. Anxious, by timely submission, to avoid the horrors of a siege, the Neapolitan cities now opened their gates ; and Charles having taken tranquil possession of the throne, began to dictate laws to the rest of Italy. But at the very moment when he was celebrating his success by festivals and tournaments, a confederacy was actually forming to cut off his retreat.

The French had no sooner entered Lombardy, than Lodovico Sforza occupied himself in preparing measures for their destruction\*. Having communicated his plan to the rest of the Italian states, he found little trouble in persuading them, that nothing but the most cordial union

\* Guicciard. *ib.* 140.

CHAP. could rescue their country from the Gallic  
 XXIII. yoke\*. He, in consequence, recommended  
 a general confederacy of the Cisalpine  
 powers, to which the emperor Maximilian  
 and Ferdinand king of Arragon were short-  
 ly after tempted to accede†. The help-  
 less situation of the Neapolitans prevented  
 them from taking an active part; but their  
 patience was so completely exhausted by  
 the licentiousness of their new masters,  
 that they only waited for a favourable op-  
 portunity, to join with cordiality in the  
 common cause‡.

The plan was conducted with so much  
 secrecy, that it was ripe for execution, be-  
 fore the French were apprised of it's ex-  
 istence. Thunderstruck by the discovery,  
 the king perceived that no time was to be  
 lost, if he would save his army from de-  
 struction§. Neither was it easy for him  
 to effect a retreat, as thirty thousand men  
 were already encamped at the foot of the

\* Bemb. ib. lib. 2.

† Guicciard. ib. 143.

‡ Id. ib. 144.

§ Bemb. l. 76. Guicciard. ib. 146.

Appennines,

Appennines, prepared to dispute the passage of the Taro, CHAP.  
XXIII.

The activity and address displayed by the troops during their long and perilous march, are commemorated by Comines, himself a partaker in the difficulties and dangers of the enterprise, with many interesting details. Their escape he attributes to the diligence, the courage, and the perseverance of the Swiss. After drawing the artillery with incredible labour over the craggy summits of the Appennines, and surmounting obstacles which to most other men would have appeared insuperable, they attacked the Italians, though advantageously posted in the vicinity of Fornova, with so much impetuosity, that those effeminate warriors, struck with dismay, left them to pursue their way without farther molestation\*.

Meanwhile, a large sum of money, which had been extorted from the Florentines,

\* Guicciardini also speaks in high terms of the valour of the Swiss, *ib.* 164. In the following pages, he enters minutely into the details of the battle.

CHAP. was employed by Charles in procuring  
 XXIII. fresh levies from Switzerland. In this attempt he succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations, as upward of twenty thousand recruits were raised in the space of a few weeks. The spirit of martial enterprise indeed was now so prevalent in that country, that both the young and the old forsook their domestic occupations to seek riches and renown in the Italian wars.

These reinforcements, however, contributed rather to augment the distress, than to increase the security of the French army\*. For on their arrival in Italy, they found that peace was concluded. Unaccustomed to disguise their feelings, they expressed their displeasure at an event, by which they conceived themselves deprived of their legitimate spoils, in murmurs too loud to escape the royal ear; insisting that,

\* Comines, speaking of these levies, uses the following words; *Tant de beaux hommes y avait, que je ne vis jamais si belle compagnie, et il me semblait impossible de les avoir eû décomfire.* (VIII. x.)

according

according to an ancient convention, they were entitled to three month's pay, and demanding instantly to receive it. Upon discovering that the royal finances were totally inadequate to this extravagant claim, the officers are said privately to have deliberated upon the most effectual method of obtaining redress. It is farther asserted that, under the influence of resentment, they had actually formed a conspiracy for seizing the king's person, and detaining him in captivity till the debt was discharged\*. This treacherous design, if ever seriously entertained, was rendered abortive by the vigilance of Charles, who being secretly apprised of their machinations, quitted the camp at midnight, leaving his generals to appease the storm.

The conduct of the Swiss upon this occasion, is undoubtedly liable to heavy censure. The following anecdote, however, shows that the Helvetic soldier, though frequently actuated by the most sordid

\* Guicciard. lib. 208.

CHAP. love of gain, was equally alive to the  
XXIII. noblest sentiments of generosity.

Disgusted at the severity of the Florentines, the Pisans had applied to the king of France for redress, and received a promise of protection. But either from a natural levity of character, or impelled by the instigations of men who regarded passive obedience as the invariable duty of subjects, he had totally neglected to interfere. Rendered desperate by distress, the wretched supplicants flocked in crowds to the camp, imploring pity in the mingled accents of anguish and despair. A scene like this was peculiarly calculated to excite the sympathy of a people, who had learned from experience the inestimable value of liberty. Salazar, who commanded the Helvetic legions, was in consequence despatched to remonstrate with the king upon the cruelty of his behaviour. In the animated language of truth, he represented to the youthful monarch, that his own glory was concerned in rescuing Pisa from oppression. Neither could he retract his  
his

his promise without entailing indelible disgrace upon the Gallic name, and equally dishonouring those who had participated with him in every toil and danger of the war. He farther added, "that if pecuniary embarrassments prevented its fulfilment, the Swiss would willingly contribute whatever they possessed, to relieve his distress. Nor would they deem the loss of all, that they had acquired at the peril of their lives, too great a sacrifice to purchase for others the most valuable blessing that a rational being can enjoy."

Roused to a sense of shame by the spirited delegate, the king resolved no longer to withhold his aid, and accordingly negotiated a treaty with the Florentines, by which the independence of Pisa was established. In the first effusions of joy, they broke into pieces a marble lion, which denoted the supremacy of Florence, and erected in it's place an equestrian statue of Charles, trampling the ferocious animal beneath his horse's feet. This trophy, however, was but of short duration; being

CHAP.  
XXIII.



CHAP. being soon exchanged by the fickle popu-  
 XXIII. lace for that of the emperor Maximilian,  
 in order to commemorate the success of  
 the imperial arms.\*

\* Comines. VII. vii.

CHAP.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

*Affairs of Germany—Maximilian succeeds to the Imperial Throne—General State of Europe at his Accession—His Views, and Character—He visits Italy—Origin and Cause of the Suabian war—Hostilities commenced—Encounters at Hard, Bruderholtz, Schwaderloch, and Frastenz—Maximilian declares against the Swiss—Battles of Malscheide and Dornach—Peace concluded.*

THE emperor Frederic was succeeded CHAP.  
XXIV.  
by his son Maximilian, who had been elected king of the Romans in 1486. It is scarcely possible for characters to have been more widely opposite, than those of these two princes. Maximilian, fond of action, entertained a high opinion of his own abilities, while the indolence of his father was almost proverbial. Delighting in

CHAP. in the bustle and parade of war, the former sought occasions of displaying his military talents; whereas the latter repeatedly submitted to insults and encroachments without shaking off his habitual apathy, or making any exertion to obtain redress.

The general esteem in which Maximilian was held, at his accession to the imperial throne far exceeded his real merit, and seems principally to have arisen from a comparison with his sluggish predecessor. This premature partiality, which his actual administration in no respect justified, by inspiring him with exaggerated notions of his own genius, contributed essentially to the misfortunes of his subsequent reign.

Since the death of the princess Mary, Maximilian had been exposed to many severe trials by the unquiet temper of the Flemings, who for some time\* detained him prisoner in the city of Bruges. An outrage so violent, to the person of their future sovereign, could not but inflame the

\* Gaillard, François, I. i. 145.

pride

pride of a nation, among whom the prerogatives of birth are held in the highest reverence. Even Frederic, lost as he appeared to be to every dignified feeling, was roused from his lethargy, and prepared to vindicate the insulted honour of his son. Nor was the Germanic body backward, in their exertions to afford him adequate support. On the contrary, they voted him fifteen thousand men for Maximilian's delivery, though only half that number had been granted for the prosecution of the Turkish war. Such an instance is almost sufficient to excite a suspicion, that the interests of religion were secondary in their estimation, when compared with those of the imperial court. The king of the Romans however had obtained his liberty, before the army could arrive; and Frederic, relapsing into his wonted inactivity, after a fruitless attempt to get possession of Ghent, suffered the insurgents to escape without farther molestation.

Maximilian was highly exasperated against the French king, on account of his union with Anne of Bretagne; that princess

CHAP.  
XXIV.

CHAP. princess having been previously espoused  
XXIV. by himself, though the nuptials were  
never consummated. The annexation of  
of Britany to the Gallic crown was an ob-  
ject of such importance, that it would have  
been the height of impolicy in Charles, to  
suffer the house of Austria, to bear away  
the prize. From his natural jealousy of  
the power of France, this consideration  
had operated as a strong inducement with  
the late duke, to betroth his daughter to  
the king of the Romans, and rendered the  
Bretons almost equally averse from an  
alliance between their young sovereign and  
Charles. But the French monarch, though  
actually affianced to Maximilian's daughter  
Margaret, who had been educated at Paris\*  
as his future queen,† resolved to accom-  
plish this more advantageous union, and  
ultimately prevailed upon the princess to  
sacrifice the fondest affections of her heart  
to the peace of her country.

Justly incensed at this double affront,

\* Gaillard, *ib.*

† Her passion for the count of Angoulême.

the

the emperor prepared for war. But it was CHAP. XXIV.  
 the uniform misfortune of his reign, that he was incessantly engaging in enterprises too extensive for his limited finances to support. In the present instance it is highly probable, if hostilities had commenced, that he would have incurred losses far more fatal, than that of a bride. Happily, however, for his glory, a romantic spirit of ambition diverted his rival's attention, from the real advantages within his grasp, to the chimerical project of uniting Naples to the crown of France. Engrossed by this extravagant idea, he thought no sacrifice too great to purchase peace; and accordingly restored to Maximilian, the valuable provinces of Artois and Franche-Comté, as a compensation for the injury which he had sustained. With the same improvident generosity, he ceded Cerdagne and Roussillon to Ferdinand V. king of Spain, upon receiving a promise from that crafty prince, that he would observe the strictest neutrality, during Charles' absence from his hereditary dominions\*.

\* Gaillard, *ib.* 185.

CHAP. Justice compels us to acknowledge, that  
 XXIV. Maximilian was by no means destitute  
 of talents, which under different circumstances might have transmitted his name to posterity with respect. But he was placed in a situation so entirely new, that no ordinary degree of genius was requisite to enable him to keep pace with the rapid progress of the age. Before we can pronounce a correct sentence upon his conduct, it will be requisite to compare his difficulties with his resources.

It would be deviating too widely from our original plan, were we to attempt to develop the ideas naturally excited by the contemplation of a period, the most eventful of any which had hitherto influenced the actions or the opinions of mankind. The invention of printing alone had effected a change, which it is scarcely possible under our present advantages adequately to appreciate. The nautical discoveries, likewise, which had been recently made by the Portuguese, and the creation as it were of another world by the intrepid genius of Columbus, by revolutionising almost every  
 5 received

received notions philosophical, political, or religious, had thrown the human mind into a ferment capable of producing the sublimest attainments, or giving birth to the most atrocious crimes.

Independently of these wonderful events the whole balance of European power had received a violent shock from the rapid aggrandisement of France. Hitherto the attention of the christian world had been invariably directed toward the Ottoman empire, as the only quarter whence real mischief could arise. But, within a short period, the English had been expelled from almost every province of France; while Dauphiny, Provence, Bretagne, and Burgundy were successively annexed to the Gallic crown. From these additions, it had derived such an augmentation of strength and authority, that scarcely a single vestige of it's ancient constitution any longer remained. In the different states of Germany, on the other hand, a spirit of rivalry had long subsisted, which rendered them far more jealous of the partial advantages which might eventually accrue to



CHAP. some individual member of that complex  
XXIV. body, than anxious by honourable and effectual co-operation to promote the general welfare.

Another power was also emerging from obscurity, which was destined soon to attract the attention of the universe. The conquest of Grenada, and the union of Castile and Arragon by the marriage of Ferdinand V. with Isabella, had totally altered the internal situation of Spain, and given to the sovereigns of that rich but hitherto-neglected country a conspicuous place among the potentates of Europe. To an unbounded love of power, Ferdinand united consummate cunning, and a spirit unrestrained by the common ties of morality. Convinced that he had nothing to apprehend, except on the side of the Pyrenees, he joined with Maximilian in prescribing bounds to the ambition of France. The means indeed, which they employed for the attainment of that important end, were widely different. For while Ferdinand pursued the crooked path of intrigue, never betraying his plans till they were ripe  
for

for execution; the open-hearted emperor frequently missed his object, from a natural aversion to duplicity. Circumspect by habit, the former carefully avoided exposing his person to unnecessary perils. The latter attached no value to life, when it was inconsistent with his romantic ideas of glory to preserve it. Whatever was rash and adventurous attracted his admiration, and the greater the danger, the more eager he appeared to encounter it. When disengaged from foreign wars, he indulged in his favourite diversion of hunting with hazardous enthusiasm\*. In a word, his character was formed for a different age, than that in which he lived. The splendid days of chivalry were passed, and with them had disappeared all those heroic sentiments of gallantry, which refined and elevated the human mind. Since the invention of gunpowder, we read no more of those wonderful efforts of personal prowess, which so

\* Ipse in editoribus rupibus conspicitur, ubi feras exagitabat, atque unde aliis spectando caligo oculis effundebatur, imperterritus ipse, ceu per plana loca ferebatur. Ghilini Exped. Maximil. III. 97.

CHAP. much astonish and delight us in the event-

XXIV.

ful pages of romance. The unweildy cavalry no longer formed the chief resource of an army; while the use of artillery entirely changed the whole military system, and rendered bodily strength comparatively of little value.

Persuaded that it was essential to the safety of his country to set limits to the ambition of Charles, Maximilian exerted all his influence with the diet, to inspire it's members with similar sentiments\*. But the Germanic body, though accustomed to deal profusely in declamation, was totally destitute of that patriotic energy, which can alone induce a people by temporary privations to purchase remote and permanent advantages. Nor was it easy

\* It may be proper to remark, that this diet, which was held at Worms, is regarded by the German writers as one of the most important ever assembled. In diffusive panegyric they enumerate it's many wise institutions for the prevention of private wars; and dwell with peculiar delight upon the establishment of a new tribunal, which under the title of IMPERIAL CHAMBER, was destined to take cognisance of all civil causes relative to the empire.—Schmidt, Geschichte der Deutschen, X. 13.

to

to persuade them, that any material alteration had taken place in the general balance of Europe, while they were allowed to deliberate with their wonted indecision and prolixity. Out of respect however for the personal character of their new chief, they condescended to grant him a trifling aid in money, which was rendered still less efficacious by the remissness with which it was collected\*.

Though deprived of every rational prospect of success, yet so enamoured was Maximilian of the visionary project of liberating Italy from the Gallic yoke, that he listened with avidity to the treacherous promises of Ludovico Sforza, and crossed the Alps at the head of an inconsiderable force: flattering himself, with his characteristic sanguineness that he should instantly be hailed as their deliverer by the united acclamations of all the Cisalpine states. Nor did he seem to entertain the smallest doubt, of being enabled to defeat the machinations of the French, who threatened Italy with a second visit.

\* Id. ib.

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From

CHAP. From these gaudy dreams he was des-  
XXIV.            tined to awake to disappointment and  
shame. An unforeseen combination of  
events having obliged the king of France  
to suspend the execution of his mighty  
plans, the capricious Italians began to re-  
gard their convention with the emperor as  
a bargain, from which much eventual mis-  
chief might arise, though it could not be  
attended with any positive good.

Ambassadors were in consequence des-  
patched to meet him, with the hope of in-  
ducing him by caresses and flattery to  
suspend his march. Unwilling however  
to renounce an enterprise, from the is-  
sue of which he anticipated such abun-  
dant laurels, Maximilian, notwithstanding  
the perfidy of his allies resolved to perse-  
vere\*. But he quickly found himself con-  
strained to abandon the theatre of his ideal  
fame, and to hasten back to his hereditary  
dominions, without having accomplished  
any thing more memorable, than the empty  
substitution of the imperial eagle to the  
Gallic lily in some of the Tuscan cities.

\* *Id.* ib. 48, Guicciardi. III.

His

His enterprising spirit was not formed for repose; nor had the inglorious termination of the Italian expedition conduced to render him more a friend to peace. As head of the house of Austria, he was the hereditary enemy of the Helvetic cantons, and beheld their increasing prosperity with a jealous eye. A mutual dread indeed of the Burgundian power had for a while suspended their former animosities, and effected a temporary union; but the claims of sovereignty had been carefully treasured up in the archives of Austria, to be produced, whenever her resources should prove more adequate to assert them with effect.

Under the pretext of guarding against the ambition of France, Frederic toward the end of his reign had entered into an alliance with the Suabian states. This association, which is known by the name of the *Suabian League*, or the *Fraternity of St. George*\*, was formed at a diet held in Nuremberg in 1486†.

\* The latter title was derived from the device, which each member bore on his shield.

† Mallet, II. 298.

E e 4

The

CHAP.  
XXIV.

The right, assumed by all the members of the empire, of deciding their private quarrels by the sword, had plunged Germany into such a state of anarchy, that the most fatal consequences were to be apprehended unless an effectual remedy could be found. Upon this subject, the attention of their wisest princes had been occupied for many years. In 1486, a decree was passed to prevent the evil. But as it could not be expected that any lenient medicine would eradicate a disease, so deeply engrafted in the political constitution, an association was formed between the princes and states of Suabia, for the express purpose of enforcing obedience to this prohibitory edict.

The popularity of the project tempted several of the electors to join the confederacy: So that it was speedily enabled to maintain a considerable army, which though stationed in different provinces of the empire, acted under the direction of a single chief. From the spirit and activity with which their operations were conducted, this establishment

establishment was productive of permanent benefit, and contributed essentially to the establishment of order\*. In the course of a few years, upward of one hundred and forty castles were destroyed, in the circle of Suabia alone; all of them the abodes of titled robbers, who abused the privileges attached to rank, for the perpetration of the most heinous crimes†.

CHAP.  
XXIV.

Not long after it's institution, the Swiss were formally invited to join the Suabian league. But they could not be persuaded that any good was likely to accrue from uniting with a confederacy, which had originated in the councils of an Austrian prince. Yet acting, as they thought, with necessary caution, they were still anxious to preserve an appearance of courtesy, and accordingly replied, "that although the plan might be admirably calculated for the benefit of larger bodies, it was too

\* This society was abolished by Charles V. in the year 1534, under the pretext that it favoured the French. Thesaur, Rer. Suev.

† Mallet, II. 299. Crusius also, in his Annals of Suabia, speaks in high terms of the benefit which they produced.

“ complicated



CHAP. " complicated in it's structure, and too  
 XXIV. " comprehensive in it's effects, for a people  
 " like themselves, whose attention was al-  
 " ready sufficiently occupied with their  
 " own domestic concerns\*."

From many of those trifling occurrences, discovering more clearly the feelings of nations than all the studied phrases of diplomacy, it was evident that a spirit of animosity was rapidly spreading, which would eventually lead to open hostilities. These acrimonious symptoms were still more apparent in the proceedings of the democratic cantons, where the opinions of the people were totally unrestrained by a sense of propriety, or the wholesome rigour of the laws\*.

Although the interests of Switzerland were completely at variance with those of Maximilian, not only as chief of the Germanic body, but also as the representative of Sigismund, various causes had hitherto concurred to preserve between them a good understanding. Some trifling difficulties

\* Id. ib.

† Id. ib. p. 300.

indeed

indeed had arisen respecting the interpretation of a treaty, concluded with Sigismund in 1474; by virtue of which, the Swiss were permitted to garrison the four forest towns in times of war. But no mention having been made of this important concession in a subsequent negotiation, the emperor contended that by this omission it was virtually abrogated. The Swiss on the contrary insisted that, as it had never been expressly annulled, it must necessarily be regarded as still in force. Desirous of terminating the dispute by amicable means, Maximilian offered an equivalent for the claim; but his proposal being positively rejected, the question, for the present, was suffered to rest \*.

The emperor however too soon discovered, that no dependence could be placed on the friendship of the Swiss. Having applied to them, as members of the Germanic constitution, to furnish their contingent toward his intended expedition to Rome, he met with a peremptory refusal. Nor

\* Mallet, ib. 297.

could

CHAP. could any entreaties persuade them to re-  
XXIV.

turn a more favourable answer. He was only able to extort from them a promise of neutrality, in the event of a rupture between Austria and France \*.

Opinions had been long divided between the rival monarchs, and while the democratic cantons manifested a decided partiality in favour of Charles, the aristocratically states were no less partial to the interests of his adversary. Assailed on both sides, with flattery and gold, it was natural that the Swiss should entertain exaggerated ideas of their own importance. We accordingly find them, upon various occasions, assuming a tone of dignity, as if the balance of Europe had been placed in their hands, and the scale of fortune was doomed to preponderate in exact conformity to their decision.

Meanwhile, various circumstances had arisen to increase the misunderstanding which already existed, between the Helvetic people and the members of the Sua-

\* Stettler. May enters at large into the whole transaction, IV. xii.

bian league. Although an imperial city, CHAP. XXIV.  
 and actually situated within the circle of  
 Suabia, Constance had hitherto declined an  
 alliance with the Fraternity of St. George;  
 and, in spite of repeated invitations, per-  
 sisted to preserve inviolate her ancient  
 amity with the Swiss. In return for this  
 rare instance of fidelity, the aristocratic  
 cantons were desirous of admitting her  
 into the Helvetic confederacy; but their  
 proposal was strenuously combated by the  
 democratical states, who strongly objected  
 to every measure not demonstrably con-  
 nected with their own advantage.\*

The citizens of Constance had sanguinely  
 looked forward to this union, as the merit-  
 ed reward of their long and signal services.  
 Their disappointment, therefore, was pro-  
 portionably severe; and they began to  
 consider, whether their interests would not  
 be more essentially promoted by breaking  
 off all intercourse with their ungrateful  
 ally, and cordially uniting with the Sua-  
 bian league.†

\* Mallet, II. 301.

† Id. ib.

While

CHAP.  
XXIV.

While the public opinion thus floated between the opposite parties, an event took place, which decided the contest in favour of Austria. Without any ostensible motive, except the love of plunder, an armed mob poured down from the Helvetic mountains, and laid the city of Constance under contribution. The diet indeed expressed the deepest regret at this unauthorised insult, and offered the most satisfactory explanations. But their apology was received with coldness; for the Austrian party was now so popular, that no one presumed to plead the cause of Switzerland. The long-existing friendship with Helvetia was dissolved, and an alliance concluded with the Suabian league.\*

Another circumstance had likewise occurred, which added greatly to the general irritation. George count of Sargans, a man not less odious for tyrannical principles than despicable for profligate morals, having excited the public indignation by some recent enormity, was put under the

\* Mallet, *ib.* 302.

imperial

imperial ban, the process being referred to a general diet. In this state of things, he heard that Gosembrot (who had been appointed by Maximilian one of his judges) was at the baths of Pfeffers for his health. It immediately occurred to him, that nothing would be so likely to secure a favourable verdict, as to carry off the invalid by force, and detain him a prisoner, till he should swear to support his cause. The abbot, under whose jurisdiction the baths were placed, and who derived no inconsiderable revenue from their visitants, in order to prevent an outrage so injurious to his emoluments, took Gosembrot under his protection, and eventually found means to favour his escape. The exasperated count now directed his rage against the prelate, and at length drove him to seek an asylum in the Grisons, while he himself in hopes of eluding the jurisdiction of the empire, took refuge in Switzerland.\*

To this adventure, trifling as it may seem, the Swiss historians in a great mea-

\* Id. ib. 303.

sure

CHAP. sure attribute the subsequent war, one of  
 XXIV. the most sanguinary and obstinate, in  
 which the confederates were engaged. On  
 learning the insult which had been offered  
 to the abbot of Pfeffers, Maximilian in-  
 sisted that the offender should be given  
 up in order to be brought to a trial. The  
 Swiss refused to obey, affecting to consider  
 the injunction as an unpardonable attack  
 upon their independence.\*

The emperor, who felt an hereditary  
 bias to view their conduct in an unfavour-  
 able light, instantly determined to vindicate  
 his authority by vigorous measures. Having  
 prevailed upon the pope to thunder out his  
 anathemas, and engaged the imperial chamber  
 to second his projects, he regarded his ven-  
 geance as already complete. Under cover of  
 an antiquated claim, which time and law and  
 reason had concurred to annul, that high tri-  
 bunal asserted a permanent authority over the  
 Helvetic states, assuming the right not only  
 of imposing taxes upon them, but even of re-

\* Id. ib.

gulating

gulating their internal government.\* No-CHAP.  
 thing could equal the injustice of this pro-XXIV.  
 ceeding, except it's folly: as most of the  
 cantons, at different periods, had been ex-  
 pressly liberated from all extraneous juris-  
 diction by specific grants and exemptions,  
 and invested with plenary power in all  
 civil processes whatever.†

Indignant at the revival of this obsolete pretension, the Swiss gave vent to their resentment in terms of the bitterest reproach: while the imperialists, desirous of masking their injustice, convened repeated diets, under the specious plea of more fully ascertaining the privileges of the Helvetic republics.

In one of these congresses held at Lin-  
 dau, the archbishop of Mentz, who presided  
 over the assembly as chancellor of the em-  
 pire, represented it as "indispensibly re-  
 quisite to the tranquillity of Europe,  
 "that Switzerland should be compelled  
 "to acknowledge a chief." He added,  
 "that he hoped to accomplish this im-

\* Id. ib. 304.

† Id. ib.



CHAP. "portant object, with no other weapon

XXIV.

"than the pen which he then held in his  
"hand." Taking fire at this allusion to  
the imperial ban, the promulgation of  
which belonged officially to the chancellor, one of the Helvetic deputies replied,  
"That he would advise the venerable  
"prelate to weigh well the difficulty of  
"the undertaking, before he rashly ventured to carry it into execution; as others  
"had already attempted it without success, though they made use of weapons  
"far more formidable than a goose's  
"quill."\*

The senate of Berne alone, of all the Helvetic governments, continued still to maintain the relations of amity with the Austrian court, and anxiously employed their mediation to prevent a rupture. But the temper of Maximilian was unbending. Taught to cherish from his infancy extravagant notions of the imperial dignity, he told the Helvetic ambassadors, at a public audience, "That he regarded their country-

\* Mallet, *ib.* 305. May, *ib.*

"men

“men in no better light, than that of dis-  
 “affected subjects, who stood in need of  
 “wholesome correction;” imprudently  
 adding, “that if they did not speedily  
 “amend their conduct, he should visit  
 “them in a way they little expected.”

CHAP.  
 XXIV.

To this impolitic menace Schwendi undauntedly replied, “Your majesty perhaps may not be aware that you have to do with a people so rude and ignorant, that in certain situations even the imperial crown may cease to be an object of respect.”\* Notwithstanding this affected air of superiority however, Maximilian was extremely averse from a rupture with the Swiss, and continued secretly to court their friendship, under a strong conviction that their alliance alone could enable him to contend successively against the colossal power of France.†

While the public was thus violently agitated, deputies arrived from Rhætia to implore the protection of the Helvetic people. The rise and progress of the

\* May, ib.

† Mallet, ib. 306.

CHAP. Rhetian league have been already de-  
 XXIV. tailed\*. We shall hasten therefore to  
 those more immediate causes of the  
 struggle, which by the arrogance of their  
 pretensions, and the violence of their pro-  
 ceedings, both parties seem equally to have  
 provoked.

From the contiguity of their territory, various disputes had arisen, respecting objects of internal police, between the counts of Tyrol and the bishops of Coire. These had occasionally led to desultory incursions, which among the inhabitants of those savage districts were the accustomed methods of seeking redress. On his accession to the throne, Maximilian had found the two provinces engaged in a violent contest. Desirous of bringing the affair to an amicable issue, he proposed to submit it to arbitration. The bishop of Constance was, in consequence, nominated referee; but the sudden death of that prelate having delayed the projected reconci-

\* Vol. II. ch. 15.

liation,

liation, no farther progress was made in the business. On the contrary, it became every day more obvious, whatever might be the emperor's intentions, that his ministers were desirous of war. The Rhetians therefore, with the view of securing a powerful ally, concluded a perpetual league with the Helvetic cantons\*.

CHAP.  
XXIV.

Thus every thing combined to increase the misunderstanding. As neither side however was willing to commence hostilities, a congress assembled at Feldkirch, in order to deceive the world (as each hoped to do) by an affected display of moderation. But the first discussion was sufficient to convince impartial observers, that no favourable issue could be expected. The different factions insulted each other, whenever they met, and even permitted sarcastic ballads to be publicly sung in the streets.

1499.

At this critical moment, a body of Suebians made a sudden irruption into the

\* May, IV. xiii.

CHAP. vale of Munster, and took possession of  
 XXIV. Mayenfield\*. The confederates instantly  
 ~~~~~ flew to arms, and occupied all the passes,  
 by which it was possible for the enemy to
 penetrate into Switzerland. A large Sua-
 bian force also assembled in the vicinity of
 Feldkirch and Lindau, while another corps
 entrenched themselves on the Luciensteig,
 a strong post commanding the entry of the
 Grisons. Unable to repose in security, so
 long as the enemy was master of that im-
 portant pass, the Rhætians resolved to dis-
 lodge them. A body of troops being ac-
 cordingly collected, the imperialists were
 attacked by surprise, and defeated with
 considerable loss†.

Elated with victory, and reinforced by
 detachments from the neighbouring garri-

* The history of the Suabian war has been written with
 much accuracy by Tschärner, who collected his materials
 from Sprecher, Stettler, Stumpf, Fugger, and Wursteisen,
 as well as from some valuable MSS. which have never to
 my knowledge been published. Pirkheimer, an imperial
 officer, has also given a detailed account of many events,
 in which he was personally concerned.

† May, IV. xiv.

sons,

sons, they now forded the Rhine, beat up the enemy's quarters at Triesen, and drove them beyond the Ill. Vadutz being thus abandoned to it's fate, was taken by storm, and Lewis of Brandis, it's owner, carried prisoner to Rapperswyl*. Proceeding forward in their triumphant career, they entered Mayenfield, and after putting the whole garrison to the sword, beheaded four of the principal inhabitants, who were suspected of having carried on a clandestine correspondence with the Suabian league, and even of having betrayed the city into their hands†.

Encouraged by their triumphs to aspire to a state of Helvetic freedom, the members of the Rhætian league, assembled at Davos, and unanimously voted themselves an independent commonwealth; every vestige of feudal supremacy was abolished, and the arms of Austria were taken down, to make room for those of the confederacy.

Hitherto the cities of Colmar, Schlestat,

* Id. ib.

† Id. ib.

CHAP.
XXIV.

and Strasburg had persevered in their charitable endeavours to maintain peace. But perceiving the Swiss too much elated with prosperity, to listen to reasonable terms, they renounced the attempt, and declared in favour of their enemies. Their example was immediately followed by many of the neighbouring barons*.

Apprehensive of the fatal consequences that must ensue, should a general secession take place (a circumstance not a little to be dreaded, from the prevailing temper of of the public mind), the Swiss convened a diet at Zurich. Nothing, it was evident, but an uninterrupted series of success could support their cause, as the smallest reverse of fortune was sufficient to deprive them of an ally.

Impressed with this conviction, the diet wisely resolved to call all their energy into activity. An army of twelve thousand men was accordingly assembled, which overran the Hegau in the midst of a rigorous winter, laying waste the country with re-

* Mallet, ib. §11. May, IV. xviii.

morseless

morseless fury. The castles and villages, CHAP.
XXIV. after having been plundered of every thing valuable, were reduced to ashes. Too weak to oppose, the men precipitately fled before the invader; while the women and children, abandoned to their destiny, sought refuge in the woods. There, in the midst of Alpine snows, they endured every calamity that cold and hunger, and sympathising tenderness could inflict. Satiated at length with contemplating the misery, or compelled by suffering under the dearth, which they had caused, the ferocious victors suspended for a while the work of desolation, and retired into winter-quarters*.

At the commencement of hostilities, the bishop of Constance had pledged his faith to the Helvetic diet, to observe the strictest neutrality. But being naturally timid, he yielded to the threats and entreaties of the Suabians, who left him no alternative, except to become their friend, or to be treated as their foe. Apostacy however was a crime, which from worldly motives the

* Id. ib.

CHAP. Swiss never suffered to pass unpunished*.

XXIV.

Under the same delusion, the bishop of Coire also renounced their alliance, and flying for refuge to Inspruck, delivered up Furstenberg to the imperialists. This step was attended with consequences the most disastrous. The confederates confiscated the revenues of his see, and applied them to the support of the war. Deprived of reputation and of fortune, the misguided prelate dragged out in poverty and exile a miserable existence, dependent on the precarious bounty of his seducers, and died unregretted†.

Anxious to repair their losses, the Suabians collected a formidable army in the vicinity of Constance. Though greatly inferior in point of numbers, the confederates were no sooner apprised of their movements than they resolved to risk a battle. Advancing for that purpose, at Hard they fell in with a detachment of the enemy's infantry, and put them to flight. Having crossed a valley in pursuit of them,

* Tscharnier.

† Id.

they

they suddenly found themselves in sight of the Suabian army, strongly posted in an entrenched camp, and covered by formidable batteries. They instantly, according to the Helvetic custom, fell on their knees. The Suabians, through ignorance of their manners, mistaking this act of devotion for an expression of fear, and thinking them already subdued, remained inactive, as if confounded at their own success. But their astonishment was quickly converted to terror, when they beheld the imaginary supplicants rise from their prayers, and heard the bugle-horn sound to the attack. Rushing impetuously forward with loud acclamations, the Swiss were already in their camp, and had got possession of their artillery, before they were prepared to make any resistance. A general rout ensued. Two thousand fell on the field of battle, and a still greater number perished in the morasses, in which they were entangled during their flight*.

The unvarying tide of prosperity, which

* May, 11. xv.

attended

CHAP. attended the Helvetic arms during a long
 XXIV. series of years, arose not less from their exact
 attention to discipline, than from their personal valour. The following anecdote, recorded by May*, Pirkheimer, and Tscharner, exhibits a rare instance of subordination, and places their character in a conspicuous light. During the course of a winter campaign, a detachment of Swiss received orders to ford the Rhine. The van, up to the neck in water, struggled manfully against the current, and having surmounted every difficulty, was on the point of reaching the opposite bank. At this critical moment intelligence arrived, that the enemy had made an irruption into the county of Sargans, and were ravaging the country in their rear. The word of command was instantaneously given to halt. The troops obeyed, and remained nearly two hours stationary in that perilous situation, pushing away, with their halberts, the masses of ice which floated down the stream. The report having proved un-

* Id. ib. xvi.

founded,

founded, they were at length allowed to proceed. A similar instance of patience is scarcely to be met with in the annals of any other nation; and we are at a loss whether we ought more to admire the unrepining submission of the soldiers, or the inflexible attachment of the commander to established rules. It was an invariable maxim with the Helvetic army, never to abandon an expedition without having first obtained sight of the foe. In the present instance, forbidden by prudence to advance, and prevented by prejudice from retreating, they had no alternative left, but to remain in the river, till the investigation of the report respecting the enemy determined their motions.

During a predatory incursion, a handful of Swiss fell in with a squadron of Suabian cavalry, and refusing to surrender, were cut in pieces. Schuler, their captain, alone survived, and though surrounded by twenty horsemen, disdained to yield. Placing his back against a tree, he defended himself with his halbert, till he had dismounted five of the enemy. Struck with admiration at his heroism,

CHAP.
XXIV.

CHAP. heroism, the Suabian commander offered
 XXIV. him his life, provided he would become his
 prisoner. Schuler reluctantly resigned his
 sword; and was not only treated by his
 generous victor with every mark of respect,
 but finally obtained his freedom without a
 ransom *.

During the course of this bloody contest,
 the attention of the Swiss was usefully di-
 rected to various improvements in tactics.
 The two-handed sword, which was too un-
 wieldy to be managed with ease, they ex-
 changed for a lighter weapon. The form
 of the shield was likewise varied, and many
 other alterations were introduced, which by
 rendering the soldier more active gave ad-
 ditional rapidity to their military evolu-
 tions †. Pirkheimar in consequence ob-
 serves,

* May, IV. xvi.

† This system had been successfully practised by earlier
 and still more illustrious republics. *Romulus*, (says Mon-
 tesquieu, speaking of the Romans) *prit le bouchier des Sa-*
bins qui étoit large, au lieu du petit bouchier Argien, dont
il s'étoit servi jusqu'alors. Et on doit remarquer, que ce
qui a le plus contribué a rendre les Romains les maîtres
du monde, c'est qu'ayant combattu successivement contre
 tous

serves, that the meliorated state of German discipline was almost entirely borrowed from the Swiss. "That warlike people," he says, "do nothing rashly. Confiding in their valour, they trust little to chance; and so great is the subordination, which prevails throughout their armies, that every order is executed the very moment it is given, with the utmost punctuality*."

The name of Bubenberg is among the most illustrious in the annals of Switzerland, and seems to confer hereditary talent upon all who bear it. A member of that family of patriots, having crossed the Rhine with only eight hundred men, had laid the adjacent country under contrib-

tous les peuples, ils ont toujours renoncé à leurs usages sitôt qu'ils ont trouvé de meilleurs. (I.) And elsewhere he adds, *Quand ils eurent connu l'épée Espagnole, ils quittèrent la leur, &c. (II.)* These passages are extracted from the celebrated *Considerations sur les Causes de la Grandeur des Romains, et de leur Décadence*, a work which might be curiously illustrated by a series of references to the principles, the measures, and the successes of Bonaparte.

* Bell. Helv. F. 11. and II. 27.

tion,

CHAP. tion, and was returning to his quarters,
 XXIV. when he was suddenly attacked in the
 neighbourhood of Bale by four thousand
 Suabian horse. Confiding in their numbers,
 the imperialists boldly advanced; but they were
 received by the enemy with so much firmness,
 that they were compelled to fall back in confusion,
 leaving their arms and their baggage behind them*.

Meanwhile another corps of Suabians invaded the Thurgau, and having surprised Emmingen, put part of the garrison to the sword. The rest, having effected a retreat, entrenched themselves in the strong post Schwaderloch. The alarm was instantly given, and troops flocked thither from every quarter. Unacquainted with these movements, and finding themselves unopposed, the imperialists grew negligent from presumption, and suffered the troops to abandon their colours in search of plunder. This intelligence no sooner reached the

* This is called 'the battle of Bruderholz,' from a wood in which the Suabians were concealed. May, 15. xix.

Helvetic camp, than it was resolved to at-
 tack them without loss of time.

CHAP.
 XXIV.

Careless however as they had been in maintaining order, the Suabian generals, anticipating the possibility of such a measure, had erected batteries at the mouth of a narrow defile, through which they thought their assailants must necessarily pass. By a circuitous march, the Swiss eluded their vigilance. With precipitate steps the stragglers attempted to join their standards, which was at length accomplished, though not without considerable loss. But all their efforts were fruitless. After a vigorous resistance their line was completely broken. They abandoned their standards, and fled. To escape, however, was no easy task. Hemmed in between the lake and the mountain, they found on each side nearly equal difficulties. Some threw themselves into boats, and perished from the weight of numbers; while others boldly leaped into the water, and sunk under the pressure of their armour*.

* May, IV. xx.

CHAP. Animated by the intelligence of this
XXIV. splendid victory, the army under Hohen-
sax resolved immediately to attack the
enemy in their entrenchments at Frastenz.
Encamped on a lofty mountain, above the
river Ill, and protected by a double line
of artillery, the imperialists regarded them-
selves as perfectly secure. From this po-
sition, they had formed a plan of annoy-
ing the adjacent country by desultory in-
roads, while they carefully avoided a ge-
neral engagement. The Swiss were not
insensible to the danger of the enterprise;
but this consideration, far from diminish-
ing, served rather to inflame their cou-
rage. Wolleb, an officer of high reputa-
tion, undertook with a strong detachment
to turn the Suabians by a circuitous
march; while the main body, led by Ho-
hensax in person, ascending the mountain
by the direct road, should endeavour to
attract the attention of the enemy to an-
other quarter.

Having climbed the mountain by a path,
which in many places was scarcely acces-
sible to the human foot, Wolleb drove in
the

the outposts, and advancing rapidly, was CHAP. XXIV. shortly joined by Hohensax. The troops having been ordered, when the Suabians fired, to fall on their faces, escaped with little loss; except indeed that of the gallant Wolleb, who scorning the precaution, which he had recommended to others, received a mortal wound.

Rendered furious by the death of their leader, the Swiss rushed forward with an impetuosity, which nothing could resist. Amazement seized the imperialists, when they beheld the enemy already in their intrenchments, which a moment before they believed impregnable. The sword, and the spear, dropped from their hands. They turned their backs, and fled. Numbers were dashed to pieces on the cliffs, or perished in the torrent below. Three thousand fell by the hands of the conquerors, who (incredible as it may appear) are said to have obtained this decisive triumph with the loss of only eighty men*.

On the following day, as the victorious

* May, IV. xxi.

CHAP.
XXIV.

army, bent upon vengeance, was preparing to ravage the now defenceless province, a mournful train, arrayed in black, with melancholy steps approached the camp. Imagination can hardly picture a more affecting scene. They were the mothers, the widows, and the orphans of those who had fallen in the battle; and came, attended by their aged priest, and such scanty presents as poverty could offer, to deprecate the horrors of military retribution.

It was not in the nature of civilised man to withstand a petition so delivered. The most obdurate relented, and nobly rejecting the oblation of indigence, sent back the supplicants as happy as widows and orphans could be made*.

Fortunate would it have been for the cause of humanity, if this solitary instance of compassion had become a precedent to regulate the conduct of the Helvetic soldiery. But while a generous feeling of sympathy thus restrained the sword of

* Tscharnier.

5

conquest,

conquest, other detachments, having crossed the Rhine, laid waste the adjacent country with indiscriminate fury. Whatever was capable of being bartered for gold, became the prey of their avarice. Whoever had charms to kindle desire, became the victim of their lust. It was against the splendid abodes of aristocracy, however, that their violence was more particularly pointed. For it was to the implacable jealousy of their owners that they attributed the war*.

The reader would be disgusted by the detail, were we to pursue the tale of horror through all its branches. But the capture of Blumenegg is distinguished by an adventure of a different character. At the approach of the Helvetic army the fortress surrendered, on condition that all the inhabitants, with the exception of the governor, should be allowed to retire to a place of safety, with as many of their effects as they were able to carry. Availing herself of this permission, the baroness of

* Mallet, II. 323.

CHAP. Rosenach took her husband on her back,
XXIV. and brought him out of the castle. So rare an instance of heroic attachment excited the sympathy of the victors. Notwithstanding their personal dislike to the baron, who had incurred their hatred by many acts of violence, he not only obtained his liberty, but recovered likewise most of his property, as a tribute presented by sensibility to conjugal affection*.

A difference of opinion now arose between the Helvetic states, respecting their future plans. By some it was proposed, to lay siege to Mersberg and Uberlingen; while others contended, that it would be more advisable to proceed against Constance, whither the Suabian commander with their united forces had retired. But intelligence arriving, that a considerable army was assembling in the Sundgau, the militia of Friburg, Berne, and Soleure marched immediately to oppose them. This measure, though dictated by the

* May, IV. xxv. Mallet, ib. 324.

wisest policy, gave umbrage to the democratic cantons, who accused their aristocratic brethren of want of patriotism, and of sacrificing the dearest interests of the confederacy to their private views. This reproachful language, however, only rendered the senate of Berne more averse than before from the war.

Convinced by fatal experience of their own inability to continue the contest, the Suabian generals had recourse to the emperor for aid; upon which he instantly concluded a truce with count Egmont in Flanders, and hastened to their relief. On his arrival, he published a manifesto, accusing the Swiss of contumacy and rebellion. After recapitulating various acts of aggression, by which they had incurred the imperial ban, he concluded by exhorting every member of the Germanic body to unite with him in chastising the hereditary enemies of all civil distinctions, and the avowed contemners of God and his holy religion.

Yet notwithstanding the importance thus attached by Maximilian to the cause in

G g 4

which

CHAP. which he engaged, he obviously entered
 XXIV. with reluctance into a war, which obstructed the accomplishment of a more favourite project. Its issue, as he had foreboded, was disappointment and disgrace. The victory of Malsheide opened the Tyrol to the Swiss, who justly incensed at the cruelty of the Germans*, ravaged the country with unrelenting ferocity. The melancholy state of devastation, to which the greater part of it was reduced, is described by a spectator in the most impressive language. After enumerating all the evils which arise from the united operations of famine and disease, Pirkheimer adds, that as he traversed the desolated territory with an Austrian detachment, he beheld two aged women, conducting a troop of famished children, to browse with the goats in the mountains; the short and withered grass, growing here and there in scanty patches, being the only

* The Germans were so exasperated at this defeat, that they are said to have murdered all the prisoners, who were taken during their recent incursions. Mallet, IV. 328.

nutriment

nutriment which had escaped the enemy's CHAP. XXIV.
fury*.

The impossibility of procuring supplies for his army compelled Maximilian to abandon the project of entering Switzerland by the Engadine. Foiled in every attempt to annoy the foe, he hastened back to Constance, to preside over a congress, to which he had summoned all the princes of Germany.

A negotiation for peace was now opened, under the joint mediation of France and Milan†. The union of two princes, who were the most inveterate enemies, in the prosecution of the same design, is a phenomenon in politics. But the completion of their other plans demanded the tranquillisation of Helvetia, as the store-house from which they both hoped to borrow materials for the Italian war. Nor were the Swiss unwilling to terminate a contest which exhausted their strength and destroyed their commerce, without offering

* Pirkheimer, Bell. Helvet. II.

† May, IV. xxviii.

them

CHAP. them any adequate compensation in re-
XXIV.
turn.

That a treaty, commenced under such favourable auspices, should have failed of success, must naturally excite our astonishment. But the pride and prejudice of the imperial throne, when brought into contact with the unbending spirit of democracy, produced such a collision of interests and opinions, that every conference by irritating the acrimonious humours, and still farther to widen the breach.

Convinced of the necessity of again appealing to the sword, Maximilian began diligently to employ himself in making preparations for another campaign. Yet, notwithstanding all the pomp of military service, which the city of Constance presented to his eye, he too soon discovered that he possessed little more than 'the empty shadow of a mighty name.' In vain he traced out a plan for vigorous operations, while his friends were occupied in framing excuses to avoid the conflict. At one moment, they were in daily expectation of receiving reinforcements, and deemed

ed it imprudent to hazard a battle with a divided force. At another, they expanded on the impolicy of an offensive campaign, when their object might be effected with greater certainty by procrastination and delay.

Disgusted with their equivocations, the gallant emperor declared his resolution to meet the enemy in the field, and summoned his allies to join his standard. They returned him a positive refusal; declaring, in palliation of their conduct, that "Their only motive in joining the army was to defend the integrity of the German empire. Maximilian, therefore, would always find them ready to resist an invading foe. But every principle of humanity (they added) forbade them to sacrifice the lives of their subjects for the attainment of an object, in which the interests of their country were not immediately concerned *!"

It was a part of Maximilian's character, (as we have before observed,) to form ex-

* May, IV. xxix,

tensive

CHAP. tensive designs, without ever deigning to
 XXIV. calculate his resources. Finding that no dependence could be placed on his allies, he quitted Constance in disgust, and separating himself from the Suabian league, determined to compensate for the failure of his confederates, by the encreased energy of his own exertions. Conformably to this plan, he resolved to penetrate into Switzerland by three different roads. The count of Furstenberg received orders to assemble troops in the vicinity of Bâle, and thence to advance against Friburg and Soleure, while the other armies should march at the same time from Constance and Lindau. The execution of this project might have considerably embarrassed the enemy; but it was rendered abortive by the want of adequate supplies, as Furstenberg's column was defeated at Dornach before the other bodies were ready to move to his support.* This battle was long commemorated, as one of the most im-

* May, IV, xxxii. This battle cost the Imperialists between three and four thousand of their bravest troops.

portant

portant in the military annals of Helvetia, ^{CHAP. XXIV.} as the last which she fought in defence of her independence. The splendor of the victory likewise, raised her reputation to the highest pinnacle of glory.

The conduct of the Swiss, at this momentous crisis, is considered by many historians as deserving the severest reprehension. They are accused of having contented themselves with the idle parade of displaying their banners on the Suabian territory, at a time when they might have annihilated the broken and disheartened remains of the imperial army.

Though completely tired of war, Maximilian was withheld by a secret sentiment of pride from suing for peace to a people, whom he had so long affected to despise. Circumstances, however concurred to spare him that humiliation. Menaced with an invasion from France, Ludovico Sforza saw no hope, except in the protection of Austria, of escaping from the gathering storm. But he could not flatter himself that the emperor in his present difficulties could interfere with effect in the affairs

CHAP. affairs of Italy. With the intent therefore
 XXIV. of extricating him from his Helvetic quar-
 rel, the crafty Italian renewed his offers
 of mediation, which being already ac-
 cepted by the belligerent powers, con-
 gresses were successively held at Zurich,
 Schaffhausen, and Bale.*

The confederates however, who had ac-
 quired from experience the necessary les-
 son of mistrust, assembled a numerous
 army in the vicinity of Bruck, determined
 to recommence hostilities with renovated
 vigour, upon the slightest indication of
 duplicity. This wise precaution tended
 considerably to accelerate the treaty.

Notwithstanding the arrogant preten-
 sions of the imperial ministers, who, in spite
 of their accumulated disasters still assumed
 the haughty tone of supremacy, the con-
 ditions were not less honourable than ad-

* The latter was numerously attended. Lewis XII.
 king of France, and the duke of Milan, acted as mediators.
 The former was represented by three ambassadors; the
 archbishop of Sens, the Baillie Dijon, and Rigaud
 d'Oreille. The latter deputed only John Galeazzo
 Visconti. May, IV. xxxiv.

vantageous

vantageous to Switzerland; as she not only procured a full exemption from the jurisdiction of the imperial chamber, but was expressly liberated from every claim on the part of the emperor himself. In addition to these valuable immunities, she farther obtained a paramount jurisdiction in the Thurgau, where criminal processes had been previously subject to the revision of the imperial tribunals. Neither was she less attentive to the interests of her allies, as it was specifically agreed, that all points in dispute between Austria and the Rhæ-tians should be immediately submitted to an award*.

It is pretended, by some contemporary historians, that the result of the Suabian war was favourable to Germany. To detect the fallacy of this assertion, nothing more is requisite, than merely to examine the articles of peace. From these it is manifest that the league completely failed in all it's objects. Whereas the Swiss were not only exempted from all foreign juris-

* This treaty is detailed by May, with his usual accuracy. Ib.

diction,

CHAP. diction, but gained the permanent and un-
 XXIV. disputed sovereignty of a province, the
 ~~~~~ equivocal tenure of which had hitherto af-  
 forded an inexhaustible source of conten-  
 tion.

It is true, indeed, that the independence of Helvetia was not *formally* recognised by all the European powers, till the peace of Westphalia. But from the conclusion of the Suabian struggle, no attempts were made to disturb her in the full enjoyment of those inherent rights, which constitute an independent nation. The flame of her freedom continued thenceforth to burn brightly, till it was extinguished by a demon, who under the imposing name of PHILOSOPHY meditated THE EXTIRPATION OF MORALITY, THE DESTRUCTION OF RELIGION, AND THE PERVERSION OF MANKIND.

END OF VOLUME THREE.

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